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MAY 29-JUNE 11, 2014

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Debbie B. Riley, LCMFT is the CEO of the Center for Adoption Support and Education Inc. (C.A.S.E.), an independent adoption family support center in the Washington D.C. area, and co-author of *Beneath the Mask: Understanding Adopted Teens*. Riley has focused exclusively on the adoption field and has created effective clinical and training programs that address all types of adoption.



Rhonda M. Roorda is a national speaker and co-author of the acclaimed trilogy of books on transracial adoption. She was raised in a white family with two white siblings in the Washington D.C. area. Her firsthand experience confronting issues impacted by race, identity and adoption provide the background for her work in today's adoption arena. Roorda was the recipient of the Judge John P. Steketee Adoption Hero Award in 2010.

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ON THE COVER

Justin Jones & Brandon McCray as Lav.fash™ on location at the Cargill Lounge of the Walker Art Center. All clothes provided by Nordstrom (details on p. 50). Hair by Tedd Bakken. Makeup by Brett Dorrian Artistry Studios. Styling by Brian Trinh. Assistance by Brandon David Reshetar. Photography by Kyle Lieberman.



Page 24: Photo by Krissy Bradbury. Page 20: Photo Joan Marcus. Page 46: Photo by Randy Stern. Page 48: Photo by Kyle Lieberman.

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Out & About

Lavender is celebrating our second Lav.fash™ issue as well as providing pages full of summer getaways for you to consider. How they fit together is open for interpretation, but when you ponder what you'd like to wear around town or on your getaways look to the Lav.fash™ pages for inspiration thanks to Justin Jones and Brandon McCray who are pictured on our cover.

Occasionally we get letters here at Lavender. When we do *and it's reasonable feedback*, I like to give it some attention. Rather than write a piece myself, I'd rather highlight two topics that are very germane to this Summer Getaways Issue.

First, this Letter to the Editor was sent just after our Spring 2014 Wedding Issue. It has been edited for length and the visual aids were removed:

We are writing in response to an ad in the Lavender Spring 2014 Wedding Issue on page 58:

"Africa is...LOVE. Naturally.

For an EXTRAORDINARY journey of romance."

It is with such shock and dismay that we write! It is shocking that Lavender staff would place this ad at a time when atrocious infringements on GLBT rights in many African countries have been recently covered in mainstream news. Dozens of gay and lesbian African citizens are behind bars in Africa, awaiting trial on sodomy charges or already convicted under anti-gay legislation that, according to Amnesty International, exists in 38 African countries!

In Nigeria, the president's move prompted a flurry of arrests, as well as riots outside a court where Africa's GLBT community face trial for engaging in gay sex. In Uganda, activists worry that the law, and the president's accompanying speech branding homosexuality "disgusting," will incite homophobic attacks!

What this means for any same sex couple who travel to Africa, is that, depending to which country they travel, a gay couple caught kissing can be locked up for life, or more likely, beaten to death! So can someone found to have touched another person "with the intention of committing the act of homosexuality." Rights groups found guilty of supporting homosexuality can be shut down and their directors jailed for up to seven years, or even worse, beaten or killed by people in the African community who are homophobic!

To post an ad like this one, proposing that Africa is a "romantic getaway" for a same sex couples is an endangerment to the GLBT community that you claim to service!

As a lesbian couple planning to marry next year we would never consider Africa as a place to celebrate our LOVE in a romantic fashion nor recommend Africa as a place for any same sex married couple to travel to for a romantic getaway! We would warn them not to go! Considering the intense hatred being advocated by the political leaders of Africa, and the laws they are enacting to support this hatred, homosexuality, in Africa, is viewed as one of the greatest supposed threats facing the continent: a root of all social, economic, and political ills!

Considering the well-publicized news on anti-homosexuality climate that currently exists in Africa, why would a well known gay magazine, such as Lavender, publish an ad recommending Africa as a safe place for a same sex couple to celebrate their love and romance?

We hope never to see this ad in future issues of Lavender magazine.

Sincerely,

Angela Curtis and Sharon Mandel

I want to thank Angela and Sharon for writing this letter. It's valid and worth everyone's time to consider. It was thoughtful and courteous and shows that there is a great need for the community to be critical of its choices. To the point of allowing an ad in an issue, it was a good ad, attractive and truthful, as argumentative as any of them, really. From an editorial standpoint, *Lavender* gives the readers information and power to make decisions. We present various ideas in various ways, and ultimately



Carla Waldemar, adding a few more awards to her collection.
Photo provided by Carla Waldemar

leave the decisions to each reader. John Townsend has written about problems in Uganda in the magazine for years. If you follow us online, especially via Big Gay News, we regularly report atrocities happening in different countries in Africa. But, as a counterpoint, we also know that Africa's a large continent, and that GLBT people travel there with relative ease and safety. As with anywhere, we all need to enter a territory knowing what we might expect. And that is why we need to call travel agencies such as the one that placed this ad, to talk about circumstances in other countries and safety options. I'm sure those agencies would not recommend that anyone visit the nations where it would be unsafe to do so. But that, ultimately, is up to each person. You've made your choice and I don't disagree with it. But, there are places in the United States that aren't comfortable for travel, either, for some of us, and where same-sex couples probably shouldn't kiss in public, either. (Not to the point of being arrested, but still not safe.) Sad but true.

What we do with our travel articles in this magazine is tell you our stories as we try to objectively experience different regions and countries. We vouch for a locale when we include it in our pieces, with the understanding that everyone experiences things differently. But, if we are credible to you, our stories can be good references for your own travel.

I'm pleased to announce that our primary travel writer, Carla Waldemar, has been recognized with two writing awards for pieces published in *Lavender*. The Midwest Travel Writers Association, a talent pool of breadth and depth, gave 2nd Place honors to two of Carla's articles, one about Norway (in the international category) and one about Kansas City (in the Midwest sites category). Congratulations and thanks go to Carla for continuing to write for *Lavender* as well as a number of other outlets. We are fortunate to have someone of her caliber informing us about travel locales near and far.

Thank you for reading...and thank you for being critical of what is presented to you. How we all learn and develop is often through each other.

With thanks and wanderlust,

Andy ■

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Anthropomorphism: A Two-Way Street

Anthropomorphizing—attributing human characteristics to beings that are not human—hides a darker implication. By dismissing any legitimacy of animal feelings, you label those beings as “non-us,” and justify their exploitation.

This reasoning is applied to other homo sapiens when we deem others—different ethnicities, colors, religions, sexualities—as not really human, open to use and abuse. In 1787, the Three-Fifths Compromise was the degree of humanity allotted slaves when determining a state’s total population for constitutional purposes.

Even we are not exempt. In 1991, David Chamberlain’s paper, “Babies Don’t Feel Pain: A Century of Denial in Medicine,” asserted that for centuries, “Babies were sub-human, prehuman,” as the 16th-century Luis de Granada said, a “lower animal in human form.” Until 1985, revealed Chamberlain, “the public was unaware infants were routinely operated upon without benefit of pain-killing anesthesia,” and that “babies were typically given a form of curare to paralyze their muscles for surgery, making it impossible for them to lift a finger or make a sound of protest!”

Not surprising, people dismiss the concept of elephants mourning, ravens solving multi-step, tool-using problems, or captive orcas

showing distress upon hearing recordings of their family members in the wild.

A growing trend is to assist creatures that have been irreversibly injured, that only recently would have been put down without a second thought. Oscar, a cat maimed by a combine harvester, underwent a three-hour, first-of-a-kind bioengineering operation, an exoprosthesis, mimicking the manner in which deer horns grow from bone. Oscar is now back on his “feet,” walking, running, jumping.

Veterinary expenses are immense, and derided by many, but Oscar’s new procedure may prove to be useful in treating human amputees. The amount of money spent shows how great a value the owner places on his animal, but also, in a society where money is the bottom line, may indicate a growing belief that other creatures have intrinsic value.

The problem with the word “anthropomorphic” is its anthropocentricity, if you will. A dolphin recognizing itself in a mirror is not “acting” like a human, it is behaving like a dolphin. More creatures than we yet admit share feelings and emotions built into their own DNA. For our and Earth’s mutual benefit, we need to realize our shared specialness. ■

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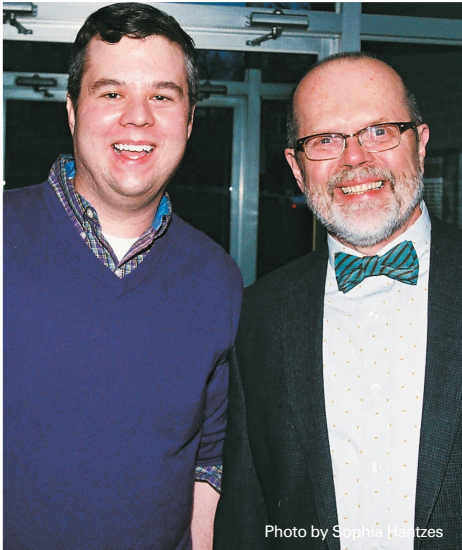
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FUNHOUSE

May 30 • 10pm – 2am

The Venue • 315 First Ave. N., Minneapolis

WerQ Events kicks off their second year with a new party at a new space. Funhouse – the new laser light dance party and video arcade event. DJ Braden Thomas will warm up the night with an intoxicating opening set paired up with DJ MF. Don't miss the 180 video screens, LED wall, video arcade and the Function One sound system, not to mention the special effects and goodies WerQ events always brings. Free before 11pm, \$10 after. Get there early. Search "WerQ Events – Funhouse" on Facebook for more information.

AN IRISH HOOLEY

May 31 • 7:30-9pm

Lake Harriet Bandshell • 4135 W. Lake Harriet Pkwy., Minneapolis

Join One Voice Mixed Chorus and The Hounds of Finn for a spirited Irish Hooley on the shores of Lake Harriet. Clap your hands, tap your toes, sing along, and dance a jig to send One Voice off in style on our tour of Ireland. FREE and family-friendly! Search "An Irish Hooley" on Facebook for more information.

GRAND OLD DAY

June 1

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The largest 1-day festival in the Midwest, Grand Old Day brings together people of all ages and interests and some great people watching. The only requirement is that you like having fun! Whether you're looking for the best summer parades in Minnesota (complete with candy, of course!), Minnesota music festivals to jam out to, some of the best fair foods Minnesota has to offer, or just some good old Minnesota family fun activities in the sun – St. Paul's Grand Old Day is the place to be! The festival features 4 "districts," along Grand Avenue, stretching from Fairview Avenue to Wheeler Street. With the Family Fun Activities District, the Home & Garden District, the Sporting District, and the Entertainment District, it is one of the best Twin Cities events for people of all ages and tastes. The event is free to attend. Visit www.grandave.com for more information.

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The BECAUSE Conference is the annual conference of the Bisexual Organizing Project, dedicated to building an empowered bisexual, pansexual, fluid, queer, and unlabeled (bi*) community in the United States. Allies are enthusiastically invited to participate in this fantastic experience! BECAUSE, which stands for "Bisexual Empowerment Conference, A Uniting Supportive Experience," is welcoming and inclusive of all people, including but not limited to people of all genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, sexes, relationship orientations, races, ethnicities, national origins, abilities, religions, sizes, political affiliations, and others. Visit www.becauseconference.org for more information. ■

OUR SCENE

ARTS & CULTURE | ON THE RECORD | BY ED HUYCK



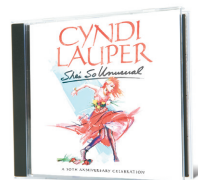
ELTON JOHN *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*

This arrives as a deluxe reissue 40 years after its original release, as fresh and beguiling as the day it was first released. In 1974, John was at the height of his songwriting and performing power, in the midst of an epic run of albums (this was his eighth in four years) that cemented the pianist's lifelong reputation. The album's classics—from "Candle in the Wind" to "Saturday Night's All Right for Fighting" and beyond are here. It's a rare double album without a moment of filler on it; the less familiar tracks pack just as much punch as the hits. Alas, the second disc features a set of uninspired cover versions of the famous tracks and then part of a live show. It's a flat end to a great set.



DAMON ALBARN *Everyday Robots*

Damon Albarn has always had a dark, somber side, but when inside the likes of Blur or Gorillaz, that was tempered by explosive musical fits of fancy. His solo debut highlights the dark and quiet, and stays pretty moody throughout. The opening line of the title track lets us know what's on his mind: "We are everyday robots on our phones." This sense of isolation through technology permeates the album, coming to the fore in tracks like "Lonely Press Play." Musically, there's plenty of interesting texture, aided by numerous collaborators, including mood master Brian Eno. It all combines to make an intriguing listen that defies easy and quick judgment. It's an album that demands repeated listens, and one that rewards the listener for their efforts.



CYNDI LAUPER *She's So Unusual*

Now that my formative years are several decades in the past, the albums of my youth are getting the deluxe reissue treatment. Three decades ago, Cyndi Lauper's debut owned a large chunk of my high school. The singer's bright look, bubbly voice, and danceable tunes carried the day. Thirty years on, those elements are still strong, as is a deeper understanding of the message behind the pop. The album spawned a string of massive hits, from "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" to "Time After Time" to "She Bop." The album is deep however (seven of the nine full-length tracks were issued as singles), which means the pleasures continue on throughout. The basic reissue is pretty sparse, though the "deluxe" version does include demos and b-sides.



IGGY AZALEA *The New Classic*

Well, you can't say this young Australian ex-pat isn't bursting with confidence, as the album title indicates. The heavily tipped hip-hop singer has been ready to explode for a couple of years, and her debut has earned her a number one album. This is a slick collection of hip-hop and modern dance music that is at its best—or at least, most interesting—when Azalea is the focus of attention and rapping away. The big-name guests don't do much more than add some clout on the album credits, while her singing is largely just passable. Musically, the sound digs quite a bit deeper than the simplistic dance music pallet. She takes cues from a large swath of electronic music, giving the music needed texture. ■

OUR SCENE

BAR & CLUBS | BAROMETER | BY GEORGE HOLDGRAFER

Imperial Court of Minnesota Sponsors Pride Boat Cruise

Saloon Hosts Pre-Cruise “Bon Voyage” Party

One of the most popular annual Pride events is always the Pride Boat Cruise on the Mississippi River. This year, the Imperial Court of Minnesota is sponsoring the Pride Boat Cruise on June 22, exactly a week before the Pride Parade and Festival, aboard the *Minneapolis Queen* paddleboat of Paradise Charter Cruises.

The Pride Boat Cruise departs at 5:30 PM from Bohemian Flats, 2200 West River Parkway, Minneapolis—just north of the University of Minnesota West Bank and the Washington Avenue Bridge. Boarding takes place 15 minutes prior to departure.

The Saloon bar, 830 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, is hosting a pre-cruise “Bon Voyage” Party on June 22, 3-5 PM. It features drink specials, food, and fun. The first 50 participants will get complimentary round-trip transfers to the cruise.



Photo courtesy of Paradise Charter Cruises

Tickets for the Pride Boat Cruise are \$25 in advance. Purchase them online at www.impcourtmn.com/event.htm. Tickets will also be on sale at the dock from 4 PM to the departure time on the day of the cruise.

ICOM is a local nonprofit that raises thousands of dollars each year for local charitable organizations.

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www.impcourtmn.com/event.htm

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Crimes of the Heart. Photo by Joan Marcus

BLOODY BLOODY ANDREW JACKSON

June 6 - 29

New Century Theatre, 615 Hennepin Ave.

City Center, Mpls.

(612) 455-501

www.HennepinTheatreTrust.org

When one thinks of Minneapolis Musical Theatre one thinks of classic American musicals or contemporary musicals that feel like they run in the classic tradition. Rock musicals don't seem to fit the image. But it's always good to try new things and rock musicals are still musicals and have been actually shoring up their reputations as works to be reckoned with. Michael Friedman and Alex Timbers's take on the most controversial pre-Civil War President is one of those. Director Steve Meerdink points out that "the score of the show is rock. Most songs are meant to comment on the action within the show rather than further the plot. I think the idea of mixing the historical elements of defining the Democratic party and Jackson's rise to the presidency with a score that feels very hip and modern makes the show more accessible to today's audience. The mixture of the past with present presentation styles makes this satirical political rock musical more relevant to the political scene today. I love the way the authors have mixed present and past within the script and style of presentation. I find the whole show to be quite entertaining!"

Philip Matthews, who plays Jackson at Hennepin Theatre Trust's New Century Theatre, says that the man "is a very complicated character and one of the biggest challenges for me so far is making

sure the audience gets to see that. There's a trap when you're working with political satire to play such extremes in characters that their true humanity gets lost. Andrew Jackson came to power in a time that was filled with so much racism, bigotry, and chauvinism that even a Fox News Anchor would think it's offensive. And Jackson has the reputation of being a very angry product of that time. But you don't want to just show that anger or the audiences will tune out. No one wants to pay to see an asshole rant for two hours. The real challenge is making sure the audience gets to see the part of Jackson that loved his wife, his family, and his country and who was affected by his past. You have to have a healthy balance of satire and honesty to make a character that an audience can connect with and Steven and I have been working toward finding that balance."

CRIMES OF THE HEART

Through June 15

Guthrie Theater

818 So. 2nd St., Mpls.

(612) 377-2224

www.guthrietheater.org

The Guthrie has staged its funniest production in years with the 1980 contemporary classic *Crimes of the Heart* by Beth Henley. When you see director Marcela Lorca's sparkling staging you will understand why the comedy won both the Pulitzer Prize and the Tony. The production captures early 1970s small town Mississippi with a striking balance of bold strokes and subtle ones. The story involves three sisters (echoes of Chekhov?), two of whom are in their 20s and one, protagonist Lenny (Maggie Chestovich), who has just turned 30 at the start of the play. It's unique because of its penetrating, not to mention hilarious, insights about struggles particular to young women reeling from the choices they made at early ages—the profound wages of youth. Lenny has stayed at home to look after the ailing grandfather who raised the sisters after their mother's unusual suicide. Her sacrifice has made her settle for being single because of mistaken ideas she holds about herself. Meg (Georgia Cohen) has returned from California and a failed singing career that she had vainly hoped would catapult her to

stardom. And Babe (Ashley Rose Montondo) has shot her abusive husband. Babe's actual crime is what sets the play in motion but the crimes that one commits upon one's self by denying one's self-worth are Henley's central concerns.

This trio of actresses ingeniously gets to the play's deep emotional core while delivering laughs born of the foibles Henley reveals in them. Call it a human comedy. Lenny's attraction to the seemingly unattainable Doc (a likable and comfortable-in-his-skin Sam Bardwell), brings out a competitive streak when the far more glamorous Meg seems to make moves on him. In addition, Meg is volatile and has an arrogant streak. On one hand, her disregard for Lenny's one birthday present, a box of chocolates she helps herself to, shows a brazen sense of entitlement, but when push comes to shove we know the two care deeply about and love each other. And they both rally round Babe who goes to desperately comic lengths to keep everyone from finding out about the real circumstances around why she shot her husband.

David Darrow turns in a touchingly gangly performance as a green lawyer who takes on Babe's problematic case in the face of resistance by Meg. Sarah Agnew is terrific and nimble as judgmental cousin Chick, a woman steeped in very specific criterion about how people are expected to act. Though over a century has passed in the house since the Civil War, it's as if the hierarchies that were set in place long ago have a peculiar kind of grip on everyone. Clint Ramos's costumes, from polyester to traditional working class, subtly and splendidly capture how the early '70s look crept into the fixed character of conservative Mississippi. James Youmans's striking set has the front of the turn of the 19th century house so that we see the front cut away as we look inside on the characters. Mark McCullough's lighting nicely suits the comedy and the changing hours of the day.

In 1980 the political correctness of American liberalism had not yet set in. Though Henley does not come off in the least as a conservative, she doesn't have us judge against one of the sisters having sex with a minor of another race, nor does she resist the humor in a woman's suicide and the murder

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of an animal. Those who judge those as insensitive fail to see the way humor can be used to come to grips with painful issues and truths. These are layers of what is a rich multi-layered comedy that is clearly surviving the test of time. The Guthrie has a summer comedy sensation on its hands with this fabulous take on *Crimes of the Heart*.

FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLYING: THE OVERPOPULATION EXHIBIT

Through May 30

Bloomington Theater and Art Center

1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington

www.btacmn.org

June 6 – July 31

Cargill Hall, Minneapolis Central Library,

300 Nicollet Mall, Mpls.

(612) 543-8000

www.hclib.org

Visual artist John Schuerman has curated an arresting and unsettling exhibit that cautions on the entitled sense that humans, overpopulation, corporations, scientific technology, and government inaction have destructively wielded against our planet. Whether we are enjoying ourselves or going about our expected responsibilities and duties, we overlook the consequences of what we are doing in the process. As monied interests and right-wing agendas claim there's not a problem, too many people are being conned by it. Too many people and too little focus on the waste we create are making for a toxified future that may be closer than we think.

Sarina Brewer uses animal skins, maché, urethane foam, and wire with *Turducken*, an evocation of a bird mutation with three heads: one of a chicken, one of a turkey, and one of a duck. Keith Possehl's *Oil Spill* uses pigmented inkjet paint to show the top of a hand where unruly oil partially drenches a green nature setting. I was reminded of just how little upset there was by the American public over the BP oil spill. Suzanne Skon's excellent mixed-media-made *Uprooted* seems pretty at first until you realize it comments on the uprooting of flowers and, by extension, other parts of nature, possibly in sacrifice to human technology and its expansion. Schuerman's own hard-hitting *Too Many Little Piggies* shrewdly uses a map of the world and the classic fairy tale to convey how economic nation powers target unprivileged children into irrevocable devastation.

TWELFTH NIGHT

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In the land of Illyria, deception, cross-gender illusion, and mistaken identities make for comedy. So you've probably guessed the playwright already: William Shakespeare. The play: *Twelfth Night*. The company: Theatre Pro Rata, a group that has distinguished itself on the producing of plays of the English Renaissance of monarchs Elizabeth and James. Artistic Director Carin Bratlie notes that "one of the really progressive things about *Twelfth Night* is that gender is almost completely negated. It's just about love. We've swapped some of the genders as well but aren't disguising them in any way. Gender just isn't important in the fanciful world of Illyria, love is what's important."

Acclaimed actor David Beukema plays the coveted role of the self-deluded Malvolio who turns up his nose at everything around him. Beukema shares that "there is an incredible paradox to him. He's this total misanthrope who thinks he's surrounded by idiots. But he's also a vicious social-climber who has never learned that 'you catch more flies

with honey than vinegar.' The people he condescends to band together and decide to give him his comeuppance, so it's something of a wish fulfillment for the audience, who can imagine any blowhard in their lives getting his or her due." Beukema echoes Bratlie when he says that the characters in the play "break all sorts of rules to follow their hearts."

SHREK THE MUSICAL

Through June 15

Children's Theatre Company,
2400 Third Ave. So., Mpls.

(612) 874-0400

www.childrenstheatre.org

The must-see *Shrek the Musical*, for all its brightness and fun, has some profound ideas running through it about the way our self-image is imprinted on us as individuals by family and the world. 1. That the judgements we assume others hold against us may well be illusory and that we, ourselves, are the ones who then ostracize our own selves and not those we may wrongly think are against us. 2. How unchecked ambition can manipulate negative self-image to its own ends. 3. And yes, it's also a metaphor for racism, though it actually goes beyond that. It makes every single attentive watcher consider how he or she judges by the way a person looks. And we all do. And our judgments are not only about race but about carriage, facial beauty, body shape, dress, etc., etc., etc. This makes *Shrek* universal in a way similar to the musical, *Wicked*.

At Children's Theatre, director Peter Rothstein has staged a sumptuous production that surpasses the Broadway tour that came through a while back. And that production was terrific. But Rothstein's actors have a way of mining the anguish beneath the surface of their well-paced and -timed madcap acting style. Moreover, the design elements are far richer. Reed Sigmund plays Shrek, the green ogre ostracized by his parents simply because that's just the way it is in their limited view of life. That said, the musical's numerous fairy tale characters are trapped in their identities and Pulitzer-winner David Lindsay-Abaire's book and lyrics are about cracking out of and potentially transcending those identities.

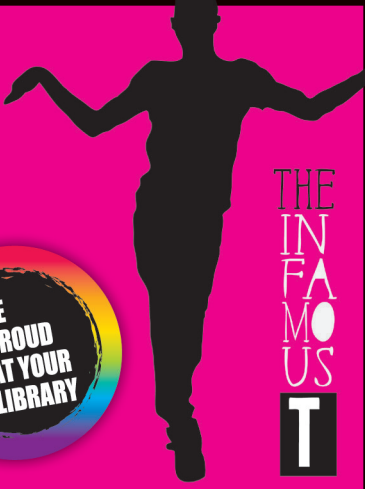
Obviously, Shrek makes a typically faulty formative decision. Having been thrust into the world too early on, he assumes he must

be mean and aggressive in order to get by and have his own little patch of swamp. His sights go no higher. Unworthiness has been codified into him by parents and the world and further reinforced by his own limited consciousness. However, Fate intervenes when the pettily tyrannical Lord Farquaad (Adam Qualls) tasks Shrek to rescue Princess Fiona (Autumn Ness) from a castle surrounded by hot lava in order to make her his Queen so he can illegally capture the throne to the kingdom. If he succeeds Farquaad will not evict him from his swamp, or so he says. Playing Sancho Panza to Shrek's reluctant Don Quixote is Donkey (Ansa Ak-yea). The two actors have created a crackling and lovable comic duo that charms kids and grownups alike. Qualls is deliciously nasty as the spoiled rotten Farquaad who thinks he is entitled to anything or one he wants. Qualls has mastered the added challenge of playing the character as a man of small stature who must scoot around on the floor. The effect is hilarious.

For those unfamiliar with Ness, she's one of those comic actresses who you will likely enjoy a lot even if you've never seen her before. But for those familiar with her work, she may actually seem ever more (here I go with that overused word, but it's pertinent here) amazing! She rivals Brave New Workshop's Lauren Anderson as the region's top comedy actress so that gives you an idea of just how exceptional she is. Like Anderson, Ness is a grand master of slapstick. She and Sigmund, having been in many productions together also and have their own special wildcat duo energy. It's joyful to see them in a show together.

Michael Matthew Ferrell's choreography crosses dance styles with dazzling flair. Music Director Denise Prosek and conductor Victor Zupanc capture the irreverent spirit of Lindsay-Abaire's lyrics and Jeanine Tesori's music.

Rich O. Hamson's costumes are marvelously faithful to fairy tale archetypes, though with a special comic twist. Kate Sutton-Johnson's set beautifully evokes the sensual green landscape the characters inhabit as Paul Whitaker's lighting brings vibrantly dramatic variation to this colorful action-packed musical comedy. ■




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SAN DIEGO

BY
KATHLEEN
WATSON

A World of Sun-Soaked Adventures

When the Minnesota winter got too cruel, many people looked for opportunities to venture away from our frozen tundra. After viewing one beach picture too many on social media, my fiancée Krissy found us some cheap tickets to San Diego, where the weather promised to be 70 degrees at all times. When the glorious day of our vacation arrived, we gleefully traveled through snow and slush to board our plane, swimsuits and sandals in tow. As we basked in the glory of the California sun, we adventured through different areas of San Diego, delighting in the unique activities each area had to offer. Here's our affordable and adventurous list of the best things to do while exploring San Diego, California in any season of the year.

Kathleen lands after her flight at Torrey Pines
Gliderport. Photo by Krissy Bradbury



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THE TWIN CITIES GOING-OUT GUIDE



The Basics: WHERE TO STAY, HOW TO GET AROUND

We stayed at Inn at the Park, a historic, GLBT-friendly hotel consisting completely of boutique suites; each room has a glorious bathroom and kitchen decorated to evoke a glamorous 1920s feel. We delighted in waking up with the sun streaming in from the huge windows and preparing some coffee before starting our adventures. The hotel staff is friendly and welcoming, and the concierge provides the best suggestions for local restaurants and GLBT bars, and can even point you to the most romantic places to watch the sun set over the ocean. Located right across from Balboa Park, free street parking for the hotel is ample, but a very affordable valet service is also available. We found it easy to park on the street and explore the Hillcrest neighborhood on foot. From the exceptional, personal service to the beautiful rooms, Inn at the Park provides a pleasantly surprising hotel experience.

Our vacation was as fun-packed as possible, thanks to the prime location of our hotel in the Hillcrest neighborhood and the beautiful little Prius we rented for the week. Though San Diego has public transit, we found that a car was the quickest way to get to the beaches and to the outer areas of San Diego. The roads and highways were well-maintained and rarely crowded, and free parking was abundant near the beaches and around Balboa Park. The best part about renting the Prius was the mere \$12 it cost to refill the tank after a week of car rides.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 →



The Pride flag proudly flies over Inn at the Park, a GLBT-friendly hotel in Hillcrest.
Photo by Krissy Bradbury



Andy's Sage Fried Chicken Benedict at Hash House A Go Go is probably the best food creation ever. Photo by Krissy Bradbury

Hillcrest Neighborhood: GLBT AND FRIENDS

The Hillcrest neighborhood is the best place to be if you're GLBT! Dubbed the official GLBT neighborhood of San Diego, Hillcrest is full of shops, restaurants, bars, and boutiques that welcome people from all walks of life. As a mostly residential area, Hillcrest was safe and clean at all hours of the day and night. The nightlife was especially hoppin' on the weekend, with drag queens and queers streaming down the sidewalks to one of many gay bars.

Though the dining options are endless in Hillcrest, we fell in love with a tiny storefront called Oscar's Mexican Seafood, which sells amazing fish tacos. The delicious food was served up by the sweetest young men that even the gayest of ladies would consider to be eye candy. We also stopped in at Hillcrest Brewing Company, the first gay-owned and -operated brewery in the country, to have some craft beer and pizza. To our delight, all the menu items were named after naughty gay puns. Krissy fell in love with the Crotch Rocket Irish Red while I favored the Banana Hammock Scotch Ale. We struggled to choose one pizza out of many delicious options and settled on the BBQueer Chicken pizza, though the Meat Packer and the Sweet Hot Pig were tempting. Fortified,

we explored the neighborhood at dusk, passing The Gossip Grill bar, which was packed to the brim with queer women. Word on the street is that Gossip Grill's "Finger Me Friday" event is the best ladies' night in Southern California.

In a league of its own stands Hash House A Go Go, a restaurant with food so life-changing that you have to plan to eat there more than once. We went for breakfast two days in a row, and it took all our willpower to not go again. With reasonably priced, ginormous portions that can only be described as indulgently excessive, we struggled both times to finish one plate between the two of us. On our first trip, we chose to share Andy's Sage Fried Chicken Benedict made with farm-fresh ingredients. The crispy, succulent chicken was made even more heavenly by the decadent hollandaise sauce that oozed over a scratch biscuit. We waddled out of there with huge grins plastered on our faces, only to return the next morning to try the Butterscotch Almond Flapjack. Measuring over 14 inches in diameter, I barely made a dent in my half before I experienced an extreme sugar rush that was totally worth the eventual sugar crash. Though Krissy made a very respectable effort to eat the majority of the flapjack, we were able to save a portion large enough for a midnight snack that evening. (And yes, it was still magically delicious.) Don't be deterred by the wait at Hash House A Go Go; either get there early or join the throngs of people sipping on free coffee as they wait outside the small venue. You'll be glad you waited around for what is arguably the best breakfast ever.



The Museum of Man stands out in Balboa Park. Photo by Krissy Bradbury

Balboa Park

As the cultural center of San Diego, Balboa Park holds most of the city's museums and gardens. This urban cultural park was the home of the first World's Fair, the 1915-1916 Panama-California Exposition. It's easy to spend hours meandering around the artfully designed buildings and beautiful gardens present on the 1,200 acre campus. Plan to spend a whole day exploring every corner of the San Diego Zoo, which is renowned for its panda exhibit. A free tour bus circumnavigates the majority of the zoo, but we found that the zoo was best experienced by foot. Then, plan another day to walk around Balboa Park's many gardens and museums. We enjoyed the Museum of Man, a museum of anthropology that contains excellent special exhibits (including one on the history of torture). If you plan to pop in to several of the museums or special gardens, consider purchasing a San Diego Go Card. The pass gives you discounted access to all the museums, the San Diego Zoo, SeaWorld, and even local amusement parks. If you're set on visiting all the tourist attractions within a few days, this Go Card is the best way to get the most bang for your buck.

Torrey Pines

In our opinion, the most worthwhile venture you can make is to head north to Torrey Pines. First, stop at the Torrey Pines Gliderport and splurge on paragliding sessions that take you sky high over the million-dollar homes on the coastal cliffs. Even scaredy-cats (like me) can enjoy catching the wind with a certified instructor on a tandem para-glide. If you want to amp up your ride, ask your instructor to show you some crazy stunts! For the faint of heart, take a moment to grab a delicious sandwich at the Cliff Hanger Café and watch adventurous para-gliders and hang-gliders in flight.

Below the Gliderport is Black's Beach, San Diego's only official and legal nude beach. Though it's a steep hike down to the waterfront, Black's Beach boasts the best waves for surfing and for letting it all hang loose. If you're lucky, you can make a congenial nudie friend who can tip you off to other nude spas and bathhouses in the area. After scaling back up the cliffs, drive up the coast toward Torrey Pines State Reserve, a park with easy trails through the ocean-side cliffs. We plotted our course to end up descending onto the beach and spent the rest of the afternoon wave-jumping in the clear Pacific waters.



Trails at Torrey Pines State Reserve provide breathtaking views of the ocean. Photo by Krissy Bradbury

Sunset at the famous Sunset Cliffs sets a romantic mood. Photo by Krissy Bradbury

La Jolla

There are beaches aplenty on the California coast, but we particularly liked La Jolla Beach due to the natural wildlife and ecosystems. Take advantage of one of La Jolla Kayak's guided kayak tours, and learn about the history of the area. Dolphins and leopard sharks accompanied us on our kayak down the coastline as sea lions basked in the sun on the cliffs above. If the tide is low, your guide may be able to escort you into caves that once connected to historic speakeasies. We found the trip to be less strenuous than we expected, but riding the waves back to shore thrilled our adventurous spirits.

The Perfect Ending to a Perfect Day

Plan to watch the sun set over the ocean from multiple locations throughout your trip. Drive across the bay to Coronado Island, where you can watch the sun slip behind the ocean next to the famous Hotel Del Coronado. The beach below the hotel is a popular place for surprise proposals, wedding ceremonies, and lovers of all ages to walk hand in hand along the ocean. Don't miss the sunset at Sunset Cliffs, either. The rocky and slightly dangerous terrain does nothing to prevent romance seekers from viewing the sun as it melts into the sea. Since each sunset is unique, plan to take along a camera to capture the beautifully painted sky.

Though we gravitated toward the more adventurous outdoor activities, San Diego is the ideal vacation location for any sort of traveler. Whether you're looking for some prime retail therapy, an immersion into history and art, or a break from reality on the ocean shore, you'll find what you're looking for (and more) in San Diego.

For more information about San Diego or to start planning your trip to paradise, visit www.sandiego.org



Cliffs along the California coastline. Photo by Krissy Bradbury



SUMMER

2014 ✕
GETAWAYS



PHILADELPHIA

BY
ANDY LIEN

Daylit interior of Eastern State Penitentiary.
Photo by J. Fusco for Eastern State Penitentiary

Fashionable Philly

If you're like me and have been to Philadelphia before, you will have already gotten a glimpse into the history of the storied town. There's Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Elfreth's Alley, Rittenhouse Square, and so many more historic locations that can be covered in a sort of survey tour of the city. Here's where we go further into the arts and culture scene that has elevated Philly to the status of being informally referred to as the "sixth borough" of

New York, as well as visit the history that goes into greater breadth and depth beyond the basics.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit Philadelphia for a long weekend that coincided with OutFest, the fall GLBT festival which is the largest Coming Out Day street festival in the world, set in the Gayborhood. We had arts on the itinerary and fashion on the brain, getting an exclusive preview of the *Patrick Kelly: Runway of Love* exhibit that is currently showing at the Perelman Building of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. With fashion on my mind, I give you this short list of what to do and where to dine, with the theme of Fashionable Philly at the fore.

FASHION FORWARD: *The Works*

Artists push us forward, whether depicting the past, reflecting the present, or divining the future. Philadelphia's museums showcase an impressive array of art and artists and, until November 30, you can find a stunning collection of fashions by Patrick Kelly at the **Philadelphia Museum of Art's** Perelman Building. *Patrick Kelly: Runway of Love* is an expansive retrospective showcasing around 80 fashion ensembles that were recently presented to the Museum as a promised gift by Kelly's business and life partner, Bjorn Guil Amelan, and Bill T. Jones. Kelly was an American-born designer living in Paris who created bright, bold, and joyful creations and, I'd say, gave inspiration to such present-day designers as Paul Frank. Kelly died of AIDS on January 1, 1990, after too short a time in both the fashion world and the larger global community.

Conveniently located near one another, the other museums provide an exquisite fix for the art aficionados. Of particular note are the **Rodin Museum**, the **National Constitution Center** (where I saw the most heart-wrenching touring exhibit, *Capture the Moment: The Pulitzer Prize Photographs*), and the **Barnes Foundation** (to make it even more interesting, be sure to watch *The Art of the Steal* beforehand).

When you want to grab some food to go or eat in the hubbub of organized chaos, head to the **Reading Terminal Market**. Nowadays, it's packed with vendors and eaters alike, but it was established in 1893 and is the nation's oldest continuously operating market and, I've been told, the model that Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis might have been based upon. Whether a quick stop or a long stay, you'll find plenty of what you're looking for at the market (and plenty of what you didn't know you wanted).

Note: The steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art were made especially famous when Sylvester Stallone climbed them to the triumphant tune of "Gonna Fly Now" in the movie "Rocky."



CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 →

(From Top) Fashions of Patrick Kelly. Photos courtesy of Visit Philadelphia™; **Philadelphia Museum of Art**. Photo by G. Widman for Visit Philadelphia™; **Instrumental design at the Kimmel Center**. Photo by Andy Lien



COME INTO FASHION: *The Arts*

Our hotel was a stylish haven in the middle of everything. The DoubleTree Hilton Philadelphia in the heart of Center City is on the Avenue of the Arts, what Broad Street has been dubbed. Adjacent to the Gayborhood, it is within walking distance to many clubs, restaurants, and a number of arts- and entertainment-centered venues. Across the street is The Academy of Music with its flickering gaslights of yore and the sleek and modern Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts that was fashioned to accommodate multiple performances in four unique spaces. From large touring Broadway shows to small performances like the preview of Lisa Lampinelli's stupendous one woman-show that we saw as it was being workshoped for Broadway, the Kimmel Center's events calendar is something you should check as you're making your plans for your visit. Dine at **IndeBlue** Indian restaurant for pre-entertainment fare in luxe surroundings; I savored a sampling of different flavors of Roti as well as the spice of Bacon-Wrapped Bison Sheekh Kabobs before my pleasing entrée of Osso Bucco Pork Vindaloo.

Note: Be sure to look up while you're in the Kimmel Center's Verizon Hall, the first modern concert hall built in the 21st century, and note how it's shaped and designed to look like a cello. So lovely.

IN A TIMELY FASHION: *The Rights*

"Get Your History Straight and Your Nightlife Gay" is the tagline for Philadelphia's GLBT-oriented travel marketing campaign, which celebrated its 10-year anniversary in November of 2013. Now, as the state of Pennsylvania celebrates a brand-new uncontested overturn of a same-sex marriage ban, there's new history being written. Coming from Minnesota and cities that are younger than Philadelphia, it is heartening to stand where our Constitution was written and realize that the rights for the GLBT community are finding a place there as well. Just across the street from **Independence Hall** is a sign that says **GAY RIGHTS DEMONSTRATIONS July 4, 1965 - 1969** marking the protests that preceded even the Stonewall Riots in our nation's history and helped begin the fight for civil rights. To stand there, between the **Liberty Bell** and Independence Hall, and realize the significance of events that happened there almost 50 years ago is a subtle, but worthwhile, experience. If you plan a trip to Philadelphia in 2015, check ahead of time for events commemorating this 50th anniversary.

The fact that the nine-block Gayborhood exists just four blocks away from City Hall makes it central and visible. Learning about the area from the locals, there is talk that it's becoming less relevant as a geographical safe spot for the community due to social networking apps and the ability to be out anywhere, but there is still plenty of history to be found in the Gayborhood. Unfortunately, the groundbreaking GLBT bookstore, **Giovanni's Room**, which was as much a social and activist organizing spot as a place to buy books, recently closed, ending an era. But, other locations of cultural and historical interest to the community are still open in the Gayborhood, such as the **William Way LGBT Community Center** which we toured when it was open during OutFest.

If you're visiting on a weekend, start your day in the Gayborhood with brunch at **Mixto**. While sitting in the gently lit second story of the restaurant, I cradled a cup of strong coffee and my companions rallied with mimosas. Then, we proceeded to eat our way through Ecuador, Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, and Cuba (I had the Ecuadorian Breakfast of carne asada

Proud Gayborhood Signage.
Photo by J. Smith for Visit Philadelphia™



(From Left) The presence of Gay Rights at Independence Hall; Gentle morning light at Mixto Restaurant. Photos by Andy Lien

served with two eggs, sweet potato fries, white rice, and shredded lettuce topped with pico de gallo and tostones).

Or, for a fine dining experience at lunchtime (or any other time) in the Gayborhood, I highly recommend **Little Nonna's**. Its owners, Valerie Safran and Marcie Turney, not only have a number of hotspots in the Gayborhood but were also 2014 James Beard Semifinalists for Outstanding Restaurateur. At this charming little gem of a restaurant, I enjoyed the Shaved Salad of fennel, celery root, radish, olive oil, lemon, parsley, and locatelli, and happily made way for the Spaghetti and Meatballs of beef, veal, and pork fontina-stuffed meatballs, with smoky meat marinara and parmesan. The ambiance is casual chic and even the washrooms delighted our lunch party.

Note: A handy map of the Gayborhood is available for download on www.visitphilly.com. Also on the website, you can study up on BYOB restaurants and find them using an interactive map...bring your own bottle and bring your own fun.



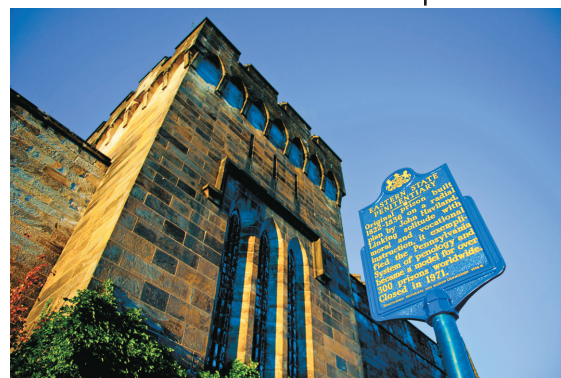
The team behind Little Nonna's (and so much more) Valerie Safran (left) and Marcie Turney. Photo by G. Widman for Visit Philadelphia™

OLD-FASHIONED: *The History*

In Philadelphia, anywhere you go, you're walking in history. The trick is to find what particularly strikes your fancy, and experience Philly's fashion of the old-fashioned. For instance, if you are even marginally interested in the intersection of history and the paranormal, you may have seen the SyFy Network's show, *Ghost Hunters*, that takes investigators to different historical locations across United States and around the world that are believed to be haunted. One of my favorite locations that they investigated early in the series (season 1, episode 5) is **Eastern State Penitentiary** located in the heart of Philadelphia. One of the most famous prisons in the world, the massive penitentiary is open year-round for tours. We were lucky enough to tour it at night, during the Halloween season, on the Terror Behind the Walls tour. Considering the fact that I had already seen much of the penitentiary on television, I knew some of what to expect. What I wasn't prepared for was how I would feel knowing exactly what the investigators found when they stayed the night in that historic, creepy, national treasure. If I had, perhaps I wouldn't have had such a large supper before our visit as my stomach was in my throat for the rest of the night.

Prior to our adventure at Eastern State Penitentiary, we fortified ourselves with plenty of food and drink at **Jack's Firehouse**, just across the street from the entrance of the dark stone edifice. More people are hardier than I am when it comes to being scared out of my mind, so I still recommend dining before dashing around the haunted grounds. In fact, do like I did and start with the Cherry Wood Smoked Beef Brisket with Caramelized Onion Slaw and the Spinach Salad with Anjou Pears, Feta & Champagne Vinaigrette, followed by the Roasted Chicken Breast with Bacon Mac & Cheese and Mushroom Sauce. That smoky Mac & Cheese is what kept me going through the night, I'm convinced.

Note: If you time it particularly right and get to Eastern State Penitentiary during the Halloween season, be sure to take the Terror Behind the Walls tour. It's a highly interactive performance-based haunted house experience in one of the seemingly most haunted places in United States. Of course, that part's debatable; you tell me your verdict after you take the tour.



The edifice that is Eastern State Penitentiary. Photo by J. Fusco for Eastern State Penitentiary

FASHIONABLY LATE: *The Nightlife*

The **Gayborhood** makes planning your nightlife in Philly easy. After you've gotten in as much culture as you want to absorb in the evening, go out for a night at the bars. Easily within walking distance of each other, the only challenge is stumbling along the cobblestone sidewalks and streets...which is hard enough to do without imbibing (clearly I need to not use my smartphone while in historic cities with uneven walking surfaces). Our party of travelers tasted most of the clubs, including **iCandy**, **Woody's**, **Tabu**, and **Voyeur**, but I took a shine to the **U Bar** and **Tavern on Camac**, as lower-key places to gather, gab, and get a little dancing in.

Each night, when my partying compadres decided to soldier on into the night and past my bedtime, I would wander back to the DoubleTree on a well-lit and seemingly safe stroll. If you decide to also stay at the DoubleTree and take no other advice of mine than this, make sure you stop for a slice of pizza on your way back to the hotel at **Mama Angelina's Pizza** on Locust Street that is open into the wee hours of the night. It's across the street from your bed and seems to beckon for you to stop by. You can walk in and blink in the bright commercial lighting as you focus on countertops of thin-crust pizzas with pieces the size of your head, just waiting to go home with you to your hotel room after a questionably good-but-bad judgment call. Just do it. You'll be happy you did.

Note: Whether you fashion your trip to Philadelphia to check out the history, the arts, the food, the gay scene, or something I haven't even mentioned, you can get all of the resources you need from Visit Philadelphia at www.visitphilly.com.

SUMMER

2014 ✦

GETAWAYS



OTTAWA

BY
CARLA
WALDEMAR

Capitol of Cool

Ottawa tries harder. Although it's the capitol of Canada, it's number four in size (and image), trailing cosmo Montreal, Vancouver's laid-back lotus eaters, and Toronto's MBAs making good. The Ottawa River separates the nation's seat from Quebec across the bridge, located here to bridge the divide between the country's French and English citizens and also—following the War of 1812—to distance itself from the U. S. border “so invading soldiers would get lost along the way,” deadpanned Julianne while guiding visitors through Parliament.

Ottawa Ceremonial Guard Band on
Parliament Hill, Ottawa. Photo courtesy
of © Ottawa Tourism

Folks are friendly here—downright chatty—serving as unofficial ambassadors of goodwill, from taxi drivers (“Try the bagels at Kettleman’s; they’re the best!”) to café servers (“Like us to put together a sampler plate?”), to vendors, who leapt from their emporiums to guide this befuddled visitor. And at the Lord Elgin Hotel, I was treated like QE II herself.

They’re reconciled—they even joke—about their image as our country-bumpkin neighbors, but think about it: They’re bilingual, not we; they’ve legalized gay marriage; they’ve abolished those annoying pennies. No loud muzak invades shops and restaurants. They don’t cross empty streets against the light: even that’s an indication of good manners.

Let’s get started back at Parliament, the city’s landmark edifice, looking more cozy than imposing beneath its patina’d copper roof. Bordering the city’s iconic Rideau Canal, it’s surrounded by greensward dotted with statues, from Queen Elizabeth II astride her horse to *The Famous Five* “Women Are Persons” ladies leading the 1929 push to allow femmes to serve in government, too. Julianne leads us to the House of Commons, where the government party sits across the aisle from the opposition, and where, aside the Canada Doors, the Prime Minister holds news conferences (past PMs, immortalized as gargoyles, scowl at each other above it). We ogle the ornate high-Victorian Library of 1876, sole survivor of the 1916 fire that destroyed the rest of the building—a beacon of erudition back then, when (says Julianne) “culture was represented by pig races.” We ascend to the Peace Tower for a 360 view of the city as its clock bongs out the hour. P.S.: Guerilla yoga classes are held on the lawn Wednesday at noon in the summer.

I pause next at neighboring Chateau Laurier Hotel (aka The Castle)—more evidence that the pig races have been deposed in favor of pursuits

like high tea, all crisp linen-cum-tea sommelier plus a three-tiered tray of ultra-Canadian treats, including strawberries in ice wine, maple pastries, and blueberry scones.

Then I wend my way through the bustling Byward Market, an enclave cascading from posh boutiques along Sussex Street like Trustfund (“a lifestyle is a terrible thing to waste”) to specialty shops and pubs galore, all centered by the food market itself and a stall selling iconic beavertail pastries—fried dough liberally loaded with cinnamon and sugar, with a slice of lemon to stop your teeth from aching.

It’s here I join C’est Bon’s Chocolate Tour, munching elite truffles at Stubbe, sipping from chocolate-scented leaves at Tea Shop, inhaling heaven at Cupcake Lounge and a jolt of chocolate balsamic at Bottega Niraastro, then ending at Play, a buzzy restaurant where chocolate pâté is elevated via Grand Marnier crème anglaise, pistachios, and candied orange. It’s sooo good that I return for dinner—a glutton’s tour of small plates and genius wine pairings, ranging from arctic char on tomato-scented couscous with collards to scallops paired with Brussels sprouts and a pour of Chenin Blanc, then pork belly aligned with star anise, beets and collards, and beef tartare with sriracha aioli and a splash of Riesling.

I’m back in Byward the next night at Murray Street, a meat-centric temple where pig portraits double as saints’ images and charcuterie plates come loaded with pâtés, terrines and sides of pickled everything, from beets and cornichons to milkweed pods.

From mega-meat to none: Zen Kitchen is humming with feasting trendsters who couldn’t care less that it’s vegan—they’re simply here for the exciting eats which sizzle, from polenta fries with roasted garlic and basil aioli

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36



Ottawa Parliament Hill Centre Block, Ottawa.
Photo courtesy of © Ottawa Tourism

(Below) Canadian Museum of History; (Right) Ottawa Rideau Canal and Parliament Hill. Photo courtesy of © Ottawa Tourism



to gnocchi tossed with mushrooms, sweet peas, and almond pesto. Desserts are pure sin. Dave, Zen's owner, astutely matches his plates with Ontario wines.

Where the canal meets the river looms the National Gallery, a glassy pyramid monitored by "Maman," the supersize spider sculpture by Louise Bourgeois. Inside, I head for the Canadian Art galleries to follow its brushstrokes through the decades, highlighted by the works of the famed Group of Seven—landscape painters working just before World War I who took to heart, and brush, the romantic concept of Canadian identity to create works ranging from wide, open spaces (à la O'Keeffe) to lush canvases bursting with color (think Matisse). After them came the volatile Pop painters and the political artists of the '60s (ironing board as a rocket launcher). The First Nations gallery pays homage to Charles Earnshaw, a Hainu aboriginal with works of pared-down beauty.

Anchoring the Quebec side of the river is the Canadian Museum of History. Its grand First Peoples Hall showcases houses and their awesome totem poles of five aboriginal communities of British Columbia under the ceiling's giant canoe. Enter the houses to glean the story, through masks and other artifacts, that lead from origins across the Bering Straits (and a beautiful head sculpted 2,500 years ago) to powwows—the trade fairs of the day—to the Metis, with European explorer fathers. On the second floor, Canada Hall traverses the country to celebrate a thousand years of history via walk-in settings, from schoolrooms and farm houses to the fisheries, mines and mills that built the nation.

Its sister archive, the Canadian War Museum, is a must. Organized to depict "the impact of war on ordinary people in extraordinary times," my guide explains, the journey begins in Memorial Hall—gray and foreboding, lined with tombstone-like slabs. Walls, ceilings, and floors are uneven, meant to convey the instability of war. A meandering path leads visitors through four divisions: First Nations through the European Confederation, the ejection of

Acadians, the War of 1812 ("an even exchange which nobody won"), the debacle on Quebec's Plains of Abraham: "the 30 minutes that changed Canada" as British troops fought French.

Next, World War I and the rush to enlist (lads needed a note from mum or wife) with its chlorine gas, trench warfare, and Canada's own punitive treatment of immigrants. Then, after the war to end all wars, World War II. "World War I was viewed as a tragedy, with regret. In World War II we took more pride. A country to be counted on," and pivotal in protecting the Atlantic Ocean, manufacturing weaponry and training British troops. Artifacts include Hitler's infamous auto. "He utilized his image just as Roman Emperor Augustus did," says my guide, who never paints a black or white picture as we continue through the Cold War, Korea, and Vietnam. Q: Is war bad or good? A: yes. And a bit of trivia on view: After WWII, the government paid a researcher to develop the notorious "fruit machine" to help identify gays "more vulnerable to blackmail by foreign governments."

Then a "war" of another sort at the Museum of Nature's fossil gallery, where dinosaur battles are described in a play-by-play like a football game. Seemingly every preschooler in Ottawa roared in approval. Fast forward a couple million years to visit the iconic animals of Canada—polar bear, moose, seal, whale—and learn how they adapt for survival. Turn a crank and cause an earthquake or volcano. Make a rock. It's all hands-on.

From here, it's a quick hike to The Glebe, a boho neighborhood (home of those Kettleman's bagels) lined with eateries, shops of home décor and must-have togs, and Octopus bookstore with its solid section of Canadian authors. Or head for the Wellington 'hood, home of Allegro (favoring classy neo-vintage style) and Footwear Boutique (hot pink suede peeky toes, and stacked heels with red and white valentine cut-outs). Flock showcases Canada's indie designers (love the bow ties!). Sooo, Ottawa the Dowdy? That was then. This is the wave of the future. For information, visit www.ottawatourism.ca.

Canadian War Museum

Photo courtesy of © Ottawa Tourism



END NOTE

In 1971 Ottawa staged Canada's first-ever GLBT demonstration, and it's been leading the way ever since. The Village gayborhood occupies a 6 x 2-block stretch of Bank Street, with 40 gay-friendly businesses. For bars, clubs and events, including Pride, visit www.outottawa.com.

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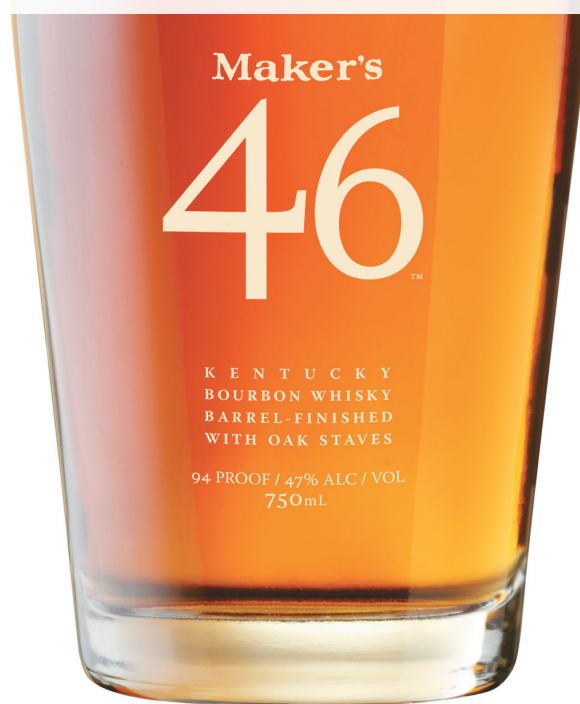
BY
CARLA
WALDEMAR

Small Towns, Big Pleasures

I made my way from Minnesota; they'd travelled from Manchester, England, arriving in the softer climes of Kentucky in 1805: an enterprising religious community called the Shakers. Clever craftsmen, they set about constructing Shaker Village at Pleasant Hill, which by 1823 housed almost 500 believers. Today 35 of their original 239 buildings are preserved on the 3,000-acre estate; 12 are open to the public, to sleep, eat, shop, enjoy a concert, watch (and join) craft demos, and hike 40 miles of trails through restored native prairieland along the banks of the Kentucky River.

The river transported their signature wood products—furniture, brooms, decorative boxes—down “the Shaker Highway” to New Orleans. They were innovators, these Shakers, looking to the future rather than centered on the past—inventing the high-tech tools of the day, such as the clothespin. Their buildings and furnishings remain models of elegant simplicity—the clean design finding favor in today's shelter magazines. And—who knew? Not I—they weren't world-renouncing, as, say, the Amish. Bright colors flowed from their looms and knitting needles, and music from their services. And dance? Well, that's how they got their name: the Shakers. Living the good life—“Heaven on Earth”—was their mantra.

What they didn't do was, um, copulate. They lived by their three Cs: community, confession, and celibacy. Women had status equal to men, just separate: two doors, two staircases, two dorm rooms in each communal house, which also included a woodworking shop, printing shop, and infirmary. One of these houses now serves as a hotel, enhanced by a restaurant. And, these days, Kentucky bourbon. I sipped a smooth Woodford Reserve with my beef burgundy, served atop cheese grits, followed by a divine wedge of lemon pie. Guests may take classes in everything from fly fishing to landscape painting and enjoy festivals running from chamber music to brews-and-bands (www.shakervillage.org).



CONTINUED ON PAGE 40

Maker's 46. Photo courtesy
of Maker's Mark Distillery



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(Left) Dipping the famous bourbon bottles;
Dale Chihuly & Rob Samuels. Photos courtesy
of Maker's Mark Distillery



Shakertown Road leads to Danville (pop. 15,000) smack in the center of Kentucky. But long before that asphalt, Daniel Boone blazed the way, and by 1784 Grayson's Tavern offered respite on the way to the Wild West. The tavern now serves as the Visitors Center, anchoring Constitution Square, where Kentucky broke away from Virginia and became a state, choosing Danville as its capitol. Explore chinked-log replicas of the courthouse, meeting house, jail, and post office of 1792, smaller than my kitchen. By 1820 a brick schoolhouse and row house joined the quadrangle. Summertime, history is a backdrop to festivals like the Great American Brass Band and the Kentucky State BBQ (plus reenactments of the too-close-for-comfort Battle of Perry, one of the bloodiest of the Civil War).

Danville's Great American Dollhouse Museum puts its own spin on history with 200 miniature buildings that turned me from eye-rolling to enthusiast in about five minutes. Proprietor Lori Kagan-Moore never had a dollhouse as a kid, but she's more than made up for that omission with a purist's collection that's age-correct, size-correct, and historically-correct, down to the last bitty chandelier. She's created a path through history that not only showcases the patrician mansions of the one percent, but also tenements, sweatshops, African-American homes, and, into the 20th century, a Greyhound Bus Station and movie house. Pioneer Playhouse is a playhouse of a different sort—a summer-stock theater built by the sweat and passion of its founder 65 years ago and now run by his kids. A local playwright pens dramas born of history, in repertory with Mark Twain stories and comedy by Etta May, “the Queen of Southern Sass.”

Got art? That, too, is in this gem of a small town. The library, given a stylish renovation in 2010, showcases regional artists such as glassblower Stephen Powell, whose work, resembling a shimmering bouquet of balloons, illuminates the foyer. Antique quilts line a wall, and historic photos of Danville's citizens form a tile montage on another. Close by, the Community Arts Center hosts avant exhibitions, which explains its Recycle show honoring a cardboard giraffe and musical instruments from the town dump: a hubcap guitar, cookie-tin banjo, and Maker's Mark bottles drafted for a xylophone.

Over at the Norton Center for the Arts on the sweet campus of Centre College (where glassblower Powell teaches), art segues from Rodin sculptures to post-mod. The Center's auditorium hosts everyone from cellist Yo-Yo Ma to (Remember?) the Vice Presidential Debate of 2010, with 50 million viewers' eyes on Danville. (www.danvillekentucky.com)

Prepare for superlatives as you swing west to Bardstown, second-oldest city in Kentucky, and, according to *USA Today* and Rand McNally, home of “the Most Beautiful Town Square in America.” It's anchored by Old Talbott's Tavern, a stagecoach stop since 1785. It also serves as trailhead for the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, with six legendary distilleries within tasting range, including Maker's Mark. To celebrate Maker's 60th anniversary in March, a brilliant sculpture arcade was commissioned from just-as-legendary glass sculptor Dale Chihuly, open to the public.

Kentucky was deeply divided during the Civil War, with 40,000 Confederate soldiers and 90,000 in the Union Army. One of its bloodiest battle-grounds—called “Hell's Half Acre”—occurred on Bardstown's doorstep, as

the town's Civil War Museum brings to life with uniforms—both blue and gray, cannons, swords, and pistols. The brave ladies of the conflict are honored in a separate museum dedicated to Women in the Civil War: nuns and nurses, writers like Harriet Beecher Stowe (*Uncle Tom's Cabin*) and musician Julia Ward Howe (“Battle Hymn of the Republic”), along with “Frank,” with her paste-on moustache—a spy for the Secret Service, and femme blockade runners and disguised enlistees.

Near it stands Old Bardstown Village, a frontier community of 1790 recreated by moving 13 chinked-log buildings from nearby farmers' fields to this streamside location: a tavern, schoolhouse, mill, and furnished cabins to explore.

Then, a dwelling of a far different sort: My Old Kentucky Home, the genteel brick mansion of 1818 where Stephen Foster, a cousin of the owner, spent days. (So did President Andrew Jackson.) Each room is more vivid than the next, as these nouveaux riches bought wildly flowered carpets to accent walls papered in geometric swirls and palms. (www.visitbardstown.com).

Louisville, 37 miles north, boasts its own 45 square blocks—1,400 structures—in its Historic Preservation District called Old Louisville. David Domine leads walking tours circling Central Park, site of the Great Southern Exposition of 1883—a mini-World's Fair demonstrating that, yes, the South could rise again. Mansions built by sin money selling drink (bourbon), smoke (tobacco), and gambling (Canterbury Downs) segue from Italianate, Beaux Arts, Victorian Gothic, and Renaissance Revival to the bungalows and shotgun houses of the less than rich and famous. David reveals the hidden garden courtyards along the way, then parades down Third Street, a richly restored gayborhood.

Where to eat? Rye's menu salutes white asparagus soup with pine nuts, then pork braised with coconut milk, couscous, and sweet potatoes, which I sided with cauliflower in Szechuan peppercorns, lime, and sesame, followed by an amazing avocado mousse with bits of coconut sponge cake and chili-orange marmalade. And a final sip of Basil Hayden bourbon.

Lilly's—the Lucia Watson of the town—made choosing just one dish a torture: think frites with truffled sea salt and Green Goddess; crab cake with Tabasco remoulade; a deconstructed Cobb; and best bite of the trip, fried oysters on grits with chipotle cream. If you've saved room: sour cherry pie with buttermilk ice cream. Proof on Main tossed bourbon pecans and roasted grapes onto local greens, followed by maple-glazed salmon and Maker's Mark red-eye hollandaise—with Maker's 46 affogato as the dessert to die for.

Chef Edward Lee is today's media darling, so before a performance at Actors Theatre, we dined at his adjoining Milkwood on signatures such as a fried-chicken and waffle starter (too, too precious), a lovely braised oxtail with spaetzle and hominy—even smoother with a sip of Eagle Rare bourbon—then sorghum and grits ice cream (once is more than enough), and apple twist cake with birch icing and fennel pollen. See what I mean?

Do. Not. Miss breakfast at Wild Eggs, where celebs rub elbows with cops and mommas over ginormous plates of wild berry crêpes with black-berry sorghum, chilaquiles, or a wild mushroom and garlic scramble with a must-do side of grits. (www.gotolouisville.com) ■

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BY
PAT EVANS

Favorite Vacation Restaurants

As a foodie, I'm always on the lookout for a great bite to eat. Although, it seems this task gets harder the further I get from home as the restaurants grow increasingly unfamiliar. With picks from across the nation, here are my recommendations for travelers seeking some delicious nourishment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 44

Rams Gate Winery SONOMA, CALIFORNIA

Kurt recently introduced me to this relatively new kid on the wine and culinary block in California's original wine country, the Napa-Sonoma Valley. Opened in 2011, Rams Gate, with its reclaimed wood and modern design (think Restoration Hardware-inspired), looks like the kind of place I'd want my home and winery to look like if I lived here. Okay, I have a vivid imagination. Perched on a hill overlooking vineyards and a sweeping vista of the picturesque Sonoma Valley, it offers a unique experience for visitors. Whether you want to tour the winery, do a tasting, or have a picnic by the pond on the grounds, they can make it happen. And while not a restaurant with a full menu, you can

buy delicious food pairings to go with the wine.

28700 Arnold Dr.

Sonoma, California

www.ramsgatewinery.com

Rams Gate Winery. Photo courtesy
of Rams Gate Winery



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(From Left) Harbor View Café. Photo courtesy of Harbor View Café. Rams Gate Winery. Photo courtesy of Rams Gate Winery



Mama's Fish House Restaurant and Inn MAUI, HAWAII

No one has ever asked me what I'd like to eat for my last meal on earth, but I'm ready with an answer. It is the indescribably perfect Mama's mahi mahi stuffed with lobster and crab and baked in a macadamia nut crust. Trust me, it's heaven on earth. Then I would wash down all this deliciousness with the most booze-forward mai tai I've ever had. (They say it's Trader Vic's recipe, he's the guy most credited with mixing up the much copied tropical concoction.)

The restaurant/beach shack sits on a picture postcard setting on Maui's North Shore. I suggest you go early evening to catch one of the best sunsets you'll ever see. Aloha.

799 Poho Pl. Paia, Maui, HI
www.mamasfishhouse.com

Harbor View Café PEPIN, WISCONSIN

In my book, there's nothing quite as spirit-lifting as a good meandering drive on the weekend, so long as there's a worthwhile payoff. Whether it's summer or fall when the leaves are turning, Harbor View Café fulfills that requirement. The cozy and unassuming Cape Cod vibe instantly makes a person feel welcome. An eclectic menu with plenty of fresh fish, meat and, yes, vegetarian offerings can always be counted on for a satisfying meal. You'll want to save room for dessert which is worth every decadent bite.

314 First St. Pepin, WI
www.harborviewpepin.com

The Gun Flint Tavern GRAND MARAIS, MINNESOTA

This place is one of our must-stops anytime we visit the North Shore and Gunflint trail. Originally we stopped in because of the great view of the Grand Marais harbor, but the food and people keep us coming back. Lots of craft

beers and wines and kickass Bloody Marys are the perfect companions to the nice assortment of fresh food offerings. A favorite of mine is the walleye filet...marinated in chardonnay and lemon and baked to perfection. Kurt's fav is the award-winning vegetarian chili which is served with guacamole, sour cream, and blue corn chips.

111 W Wisconsin St. Grand Marais, MN
www.gunflinttavern.com

The Loeb Boat House CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK

Sure, it's one of New York's best-known tourist attractions, but the Boat House somehow manages to maintain its own identity in one of the best-known parks in the world. Long a favorite of movie and television directors (*Sex And The City* fans will recognize this as the spot where Big and Carrie fell into the water), I love it mainly because it provides a charming oasis of calm from the crazy pace of the city. And it is an ideal spot to sip a cocktail and munch on something while enjoying the picturesque setting. And, yes, you can even rent a boat here.

Reservations are a good idea.
E 72nd St. and 5th Ave. New York, NY
www.thecentralparkboathouse.com

Boulevard SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

I grew up near San Francisco and this is my family's favorite occasion restaurant. When you step into the grand Belle Epoque appointed dining room with sweeping views of the water and Bay Bridge, it really feels like you are some place special. And for good reason; the historical building that houses Boulevard is the only local structure to survive the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire.

Then there is the food. The kitchen is headed by Northern California culinary royalty Nancy Oakes who says, "We don't think for a minute that we've invented a new cuisine or discovered a new approach to cooking, only a never ending quest for what's delicious." I've

never gone wrong with server recommendations. Extensive champagne and wine lists.

Expensive but worth splurging for.
1 Mission St. San Francisco, CA
www.boulevardrestaurant.com

Central Michel Richard WASHINGTON, D.C.

You don't have to be politically connected to get a table at this popular D.C. eatery, but you just might see a few of Washington's glitterati here. And that shouldn't come as a surprise; the location is perfect, the food is great, and so are the cocktails. Acclaimed French Chef Michel Richard's menu offers new and fresh twists on classic American favorites. For example, the burger has a base of tomato confit topped by grade-A beef with crunchy potato tuiles, bacon and cheddar. (Easily one of the best burgers I've ever eaten.) Along with comfort food favorites, there are also fresh fish entrées and a generous array of veggies and salads. Don't worry if you didn't make a reservation and the place is packed, head to the bar; it's the same menu.

1001 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington, D.C.
www.centralmichelrichard.com

Coco Pazzo Italian Restaurant CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

In a city that has no shortage of world-class food choices, it's difficult to stand out, yet this place does. Located in the River North area of downtown, the welcome begins as you take in some of the inviting smells in the inviting loft space. Close your eyes, inhale, and you'll think you're in Tuscany. Of course, that's the whole idea! All of the pasta is homemade. Standouts include pappardelle wild boar ragu and the antipasto bar, which could be a meal by itself. Attentive servers are terrific at not only explaining the menu, but they are also particularly adept at helping expand your culinary horizons.

300 W. Hubbard St. Chicago, IL
www.cocopazzochicago.com

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BY
RANDY STERN



2014 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Freedom Edition is ready to getaway. Photo by Randy Stern

Making A Getaway

You are planning a getaway. Let me be the first to congratulate you for doing so.

No, seriously, we love to travel. It is our way to participate in what the world offers us. When we travel, we certainly do it in style. That includes travel by automobile.

It is not just us that love automobile travel. According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics of the United States Department of Transportation, 35.5 Million American trav-

eled by car during the Independence Day holiday in 2012. That figure represents 84% of all travel during the same period. We certainly have our summer cut out for us, do we not?

Travel by automobile has its advantages. You get to see things on ground level. If you have passengers, they will most likely see more than you. You have to do the driving, but you would also know where to stop if your passengers decided it was time to see

the sights up close and personal. You also have control of the audio, the climate control, and the actual direction of the vehicle toward your particular destination. Plus, you can go and stop anytime you want.

No waiting in lines for security, either, unless you travel into California where they ask if you brought in fruit or other plant life deemed unworthy of consumption inside the state. Or, you need to cross a border into an-

other country, such as Canada.

Let us not forget that you take anything you want with you in your automobile, within legal reason. The 3-3-1 rule goes out the window as you pack all the creams, gels, and liquids in your bags that you normally would not travel with in the air. You can pack anything that would beep through a metal detector or an x-ray scanner. Plus, there are tents, sleeping bags, hand drums, dogs of any size, and every bit of clothing you might think you could wear during your adventure.

The only time you could get into trouble is if you over-packed a very small car. Do you need to bring two massive suitcases into a sports car? You are staying at a bed and breakfast...

There is definitely something about the freedom of traveling by automobile. The idea of you and your loved one taking the road to parts unknown and discovering things you might not encounter at home. Such as down home hospitality, better prepared food, and a lower food bill. You may have found a treasure at some shop that you would think no one would have.

Traveling for two is quite easy by car, also. If you have hours to go on the road, your loved one would take turns driving with you. There is no exact formula as to how many hours behind the wheel one should take. If one could pull a few hours behind the wheel, the other could easily take over for any length of time. One would hope this would not become a point of contention and argument, but rather a loving collaboration to get to your destination safely.

Safety is indeed a consideration. If you drive to, say, the Badlands or Chicago, you are faced with a lot of hours of Interstate driving. The only tip to expound here is to simply know your limits. Can you drive long distance without fatigue? What about your loved one's limits? Between the two of you is a safe drive to your destination, considering "shifts" behind the wheel and making stops along the way to eat, hydrate, and relax.

Or, you could be like me, a solo traveler. There are no statistics available distinguishing the percentage of solo travelers in comparison to couples, families, and groups. But, we do exist.

The challenge for solo travelers exposes our own strengths and weaknesses. We have to make our own plans understanding our own limits in getting behind the wheel for any length of time. We have to find ways to entertain ourselves. Yet, we are on our own—freedom multiplied.

If there is an advantage to automobile travel, it is the level of technology available

within reach of our fingertips. The preferable form of technology would be on board your automobile. Consider the wonders of using Bluetooth to call ahead for reservations or to play your favorite tracks on your audio system. If you get lost, you have a navigation screen available to see your way to wherever you need to go. If your vehicle is not equipped with any of these technological marvels, you could always set up or smartphone to do these functions or go to an electronics shop to have these ready at your whim.

There is a catch to all of this technology. There has been a lot said about curtailing distracted driving. As much as we want to text our friends, use certain apps to, well, do almost the same thing, or put our phones up to our ears instead of using the Bluetooth connection, some people are watching you. If last month's dragnet by Minnesota law enforcement agencies were any indicator of the crack-down on distracted driving, you may want to rethink using your mobile device on the road.

Here is my suggestion: Get a Bluetooth connection going, even if it means an wearing an earpiece on the road, if legal in the state you are driving in. Otherwise, leave the texting and the app play for when you actually stop the car. No text is worth averting your eyes off the road—seriously.

And, please, no selfies when driving. Thank you.

Yes, this is all tongue-in-cheek, but there is a message behind all of this. There are considerations for safety, some trip planning and other pieces of wonderful advice to make your summer automobile getaway enjoyable, yet you simply just need to have fun. Don't stress over the little things. If you forgot to book a hotel, there are ways to get them cheaper than what they advertise. Have a flat tire and need roadside assistance, there are plenty of resources to help right at your fingertips.

Just get out there and take to the road! Oh, and you're welcome. ■



Before you fill the back of this Jeep...consider these tips. Photo by Randy Stern

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Photo by Kyle Lieberman

MORE THAN ANYTHING

From the Lips of Emma Berg

White. Everything in this room is white. White floors. White doors. White walls. White pillows. White linens. White. White. White.

Emma Berg sits at the end of a minimalist bed, knees met, posing for our photographer as unassuming as she sounds. Her voice is soft, her mannerisms are sometimes awkwardly innocent, and she has about her an air of the ethereal. These walls enshrine her purity, brilliance, beauty, and—

"That's crazy bullshit," she says.

And the beat drops.

"I like ambitious people who make the city more interesting in a not-so-selfish way," she says. "As soon as you're like, 'I deserve that,' well, that's crazy bullshit."

We sit in her living room for our interview. Her white pantsuit almost blends in with her sofa. Between us is a coffee table made from a tree stump; on it rests a tidy arrangement of strawberries, cheeses, and meats. She sits with her hands clasped in her lap, legs crossed.

Emma Berg is one of the most recognized, most critically-acclaimed clothing designers in the Midwest. She's famous for her drapery, her ability to build purposeful narratives into her collections, and for her painstaking attention to quality. She's equally well known for her charity and modesty, every year dedicating one season's line to a cause, and humble, always, in the face of notoriety.

Her designs tell stories, and rarely her own. Her garments reflect in them not the artist's personal strife, but the grievances of populations, social injustices, and reflections on popular culture. Her storytelling lies in epics, not episodes—there are no true Emma "singles." Every look she produces is part of a much larger, often political arc, yet taken à la carte, also chic and wearable. Her upcoming fall collection, *The Curse of the Sisyphus*, is a commentary on socioeconomic.

What her designs won't tell you is what we hear now.

She wears a glittery ring shaped like giant red lips. It catches the light when she gestures. She laughs at dirty jokes and moves seamlessly between serious and lighthearted conversation. She never evades a question and her answers are thoughtful but sharp. Her opinions on the Twin Cities fashion scene are surprisingly forthright.

"We [in the Twin Cities fashion industry] like to be nice, and I think it's incredible to include everybody," she says. "But that doesn't mean everybody needs to be a designer or an artist. We let so many people play that it gets diluted. If you have a terrible show, to the people watching it, *that* is Minneapolis. *That* is how people see us. And they aren't going to come back."

She rests part of the blame on the media. With an influx of designers and

boutiques, the fashion scene in the Twin Cities is robust, but the growth comes at the price of quality. The media has kept pace with the scene's growth as it attempts to cover *everything*, consequently promoting attendance to undeserving shows that don't benefit local designers. Talent exists, perhaps in great troves, but is buried under such distractions.

"Not everything should get press," she says.

She understands that the industry is in a difficult position, saying that the scene is so interwoven that lines blur between professional and personal designer-media relationships. Feelings are hurt easily and straightforwardness is rare.

"It's hard for someone to give real feedback and not hear, 'okay, we're not friends anymore.'"

She calls for a more consolidated approach to fashion shows that benefits designers, harder critics in the media, and more community collaboration. Collaboration is particularly difficult, she says, because the scene is so small that people are busy building their own brands and lack the wherewithal to engage others.

Her perspective isn't universally critical, however. She commends the work of designers Joy Teiken, Lindsay Hopkins, and Caroline Hayden as a few of the Cities' best, and she believes that the fashion scene is on the up.

Sharing critical opinions on Twin Cities fashion so publicly is rare for someone of her stature, but she delivers them without being caustic and without condescension. She speaks with unguarded candor, direct but concerned. Her honesty is comforting in many ways, reaffirming commonly held beliefs from which too many others shy away.

Emma isn't an idle critic, however. She's nurtured young designers, attends fashion events to support the community, regularly collaborates with industry peers, and almost exclusively wears local designers.

Almost exclusively wears local designers, let's stress. Emma shops American Apparel for nylons and tights, and while picking up a pair, a cashier once warned Emma Berg that tights ran small. And what could be more amusing than seeing Emma Berg, a queen of Midwest fashion, being instructed on buying tights?

As for what's next, "more" is the word. She plans to focus on expanding her business, continue her charitable giving, and continue helping cultivate the community. She tells us that plateauing for her is unacceptable: There's always room for improvement, always more to learn, always more to offer. She happens to have that mantra—"more"—tattooed on the inside of her bottom lip as a reminder.

As we wrap interview, after our cheek-pecks and last minute photos, it strikes us that her bedroom, consumed in white though it is, is absent of color not as a reflection of innocence, but as a canvas for perspective. ■



Portrait by Brandon Reshetar

(Left to Right)

Will:

- Swim Trunks by Andrew Christian \$54.95
- Tank Top by Andrew Christian \$36.95
- *All provided by Adonis Bodywear in Uptown

Cody:

- Swim Shorts by Penguin \$69
- Shirt by Penguin \$69
- Sunglasses Alexander Trees \$125
- *All provided by Atmosfere

Augustah:

- Jumpsuit by Bless'ed are the Meek \$180
- Fedora by Olive & Pique \$62
- *Clothing provided by Covered Uptown
- Earrings by SBG Designs \$68 from shopmotto.com
- Bracelets by Tess+Tricia \$25 each from shopmotto.com

Melissa:

- Dress by LOVE by Diego Binetti \$298 from shopmotto.com
- Earrings by SBG Designs \$120 from shopmotto.com

Nico:

- Tank top by Shades of Grey \$48
- Shorts by Shades of Grey \$79
- *All provided by Atmosfere

- *Hair and styling by Brian Trinh
- *Makeup by Naseem Rafiei
- *Photography by Kyle Lieberman
- *Models provided by Ignite

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- Shirt by Hugo Boss \$145
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- Shoes by 1901 \$99.95
- Pocket Square by J.Z. Richards \$39.50
- Belt by Nordstrom \$49.50

On Brandon:

- Suit by Hugo Boss \$795
- Shirt by David Donahue \$135
- Shoes by Allen Edmonds \$365
- Pocket square by J.Z. Richards \$39.50
- Belt by Magnanni \$150

- *All clothes provided by Nordstrom
- *Hair by Tedd Bakken
- *Makeup by Brett Dorrian Artistry Studios
- *Photography by Kyle Lieberman
- *Styling by Brian Trinh
- *Location: Cargill Lounge and the Walker Art Museum



SUMMER TRENDS 2014

Summer is closing in and though the air will soon be State Fair cotton candy-thick, style won't vacation. Minnesota summers are short, but packed with days spent on the lake, outdoor BBQs, and sunbathing on rooftops. Showing skin this time of year is more than sexy; it's necessary. Make sure you do it right. Patterns and prints, especially florals, carry over from spring, but this year's summer comes with two themes that everyone can rock: **sophisticated** and **athletic**.

SOPHISTICATION

Ladies: Lace is a conduit for sophistication and femininity when executed appropriately. It's everywhere this summer, from soft tops to summer dresses and short shorts. Miss Kelly makes a great cream-colored lace short (available at Len Druskin, \$69). Elegant but lightweight and breathable, lace is a perfect fit for a hot summer night.

Men: Sophistication takes shape in fitted short sleeve button-ups and modern fedoras, but will most often be seen this summer in tailored shorts. The fitted look comes as a summer version of the Euro-cut suit, circa last fall, that emerged this spring as a short. The refined look hits about an inch or so above the knee with a more snug fit than shorts in seasons past.



Photo by Kyle Lieberman

the knee with a more snug fit than shorts in seasons past.

ATHLETIC GEAR

is a staple of spring and summer runways, but this year you'll see it in everyday attire—not just geared for the court, field or gym.

Ladies: Baseball caps, as shown by John Galliano, tennis themed skirts, and crop tops make the trend. Summer will also reintroduce the varsity jacket as a wearable piece. Pair one with a cute summer dress and you're sure to stop the show.

Men: Your upper body is your focus this summer. Pair patterned tank tops with solid-colored shorts during the day and solid-colored tanks with denim at night.

Atmosphere in Uptown has a variety of tank top options starting at \$38.

Oh! We can't forget the most necessary piece of your summer wardrobe: swimwear! Ladies, a bold one-piece with sexy cutouts is the way to go—no need for the bikini. Guys, that tailored short carries over to the tailored trunk—gone are the days of the baggy board short. Check out Nani Nalu in Edina, Big Island Swim & Surf Company in Excelsior or Adonis in Uptown for a bevy of swimwear options.

THE SHOWS

Photos by Jeffrey Bryce Bordenkecher



Joynoëlle 2014/2015 Ready to Wear • Miller Bag Building | Tuesday April 29th • Models: Vision Management Group, Inc. • Hair & Makeup: Extrados

Photos by Kyle Lieberman



Caroline Hayden



Idle Child



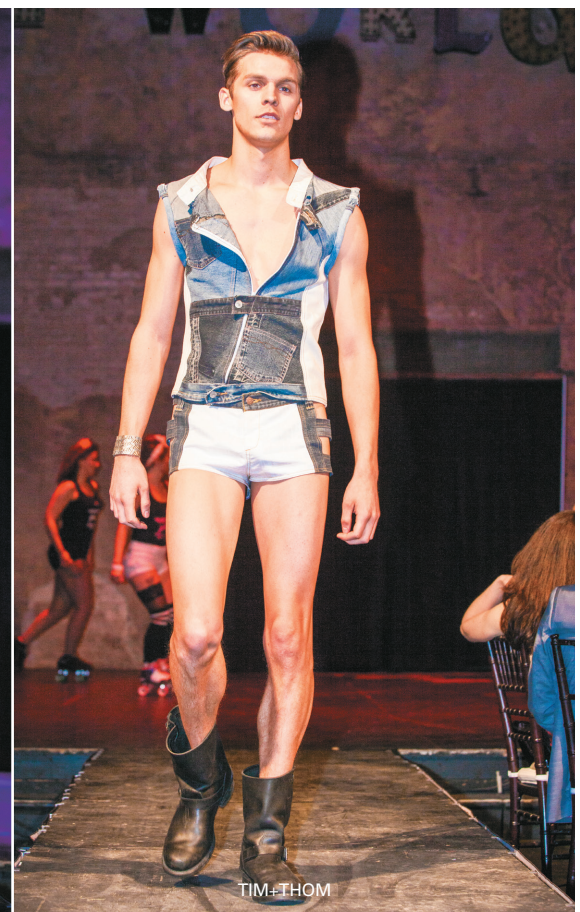
Martin Patrick3

Envision • Orchestra Hall | Saturday, April 26th • Produced by Ignite Models and V2 • Models by Ignite • Hair by Rocco Altobelli Salon and Day Spa • Makeup by The Beauty Lounge

FOR MORE COVERAGE AND COMMENTARY ON OUR FAVORITE SHOWS, VISIT LAVENDERMAGAZINE.COM.



Emma Berg's I AM EVERYTHING (Prom Dresses for the Boys and Girls Club) • Ritz Theater | Tuesday, April 22nd • Produced by Sarah Edwards • Hosted by Grant Whittaker • Models by Vision Management Group, Inc. • Styling by Lisa Marie Gherardini for Motto and Davee Ek for Emma Berg



Arena Bikini Cherry Bomb 7th Annual Swimwear Fashion Show • Aria Minneapolis | Friday, March 21st • Produced by Idea Factory • Fashion show Produced & Designed by Style Architects • Hosted by the CW's Carly Aplin • Models by Arquette

IN THE CROWD

Envision Spring 2014

Photos by Kyle Lieberman





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Leather and Social Capital, 2014

Your humble columnist, you may recall, is currently a student at Metropolitan State University in St. Paul, Minnesota. For a course titled “Ethics in the Age of the Internet,” I wrote a paper concerning the Internet’s recent effects on democracy and community. (Heavy stuff, right?)

As I was writing that paper, of course, I was also applying the concepts I was discussing in it to the leather/BDSM/fetish community. Although I was pessimistic about the Internet’s effects on democracy as a whole, I was pleasantly surprised when I thought about the effects that the last decade’s technological innovations seem to be having on our community.

Return with me to 2005, when I published a column (*Lavender* #272, Oct. 28) titled “Leather and Social Capital.” According to Dr. Robert Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard who was featured in that column, social capital is defined as “features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.”

In the “Leather and Social Capital” column, I discussed a description by Dr. Putnam of the way social connectedness had plummeted in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Among the factors Putnam blamed for the decline were television, suburbanization, and a decline in entertaining. Putnam also noted the decline of long-established social organizations, institutions, and frameworks such as the American Legion and VFW. Putnam wondered what kinds of social organizations would evolve to fill the social needs that used to be filled

by these organizations (or, alternatively, how organizations would re-invent themselves to stay relevant).

At that time Putnam believed the Internet might be one key to reestablishing connections among people. He predicted that the Internet would either evolve into a “super telephone,” which would help to keep us connected, or a “super television,” which would further isolate us. Putnam noted that “You don’t make friends over the telephone,” but rather that telephones are used to keep us connected to people we already know.

That was in 2005. In 2007 the iPhone was introduced, and, compared to what had come before, it was certainly a “super telephone.” The iPhone combined a telephone, a camera, a touchscreen computer, and an Internet connection in one pocket-sized device. Other smartphones followed, and they have revolutionized the multiple ways in which people communicate—not only voice and text messages, but also video chats, photographs and homemade movies delivered to one or multiple persons as soon as the images are captured. (And, contrary to what Putnam said above, you certainly can use any number of apps on your phone, including Grindr, to meet new people and make new friends as well.)

Smartphones can increase our sense of connection to people far away, but what about real-life, local connectedness? Facebook, which was opened to the public shortly after the “social capital” column was published in 2005, also could be considered part of that “super telephone” phenomenon (although smartphones also function as a “super tele-

vision”). In a breathtakingly short time, Facebook has become a popular piece of Internet infrastructure used for maintaining our connections to our social networks, both local and long-distance.

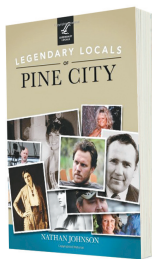
In the case of the Twin Cities leather community, Facebook has become one of the primary methods of publicizing real-life events where people actually show up in person and, like, you know, talk to each other face-to-face. Rather than replacing face-to-face social interaction and diluting community connections, Facebook is being used to facilitate face-to-face interaction and to strengthen community connections. I consider that a positive development.

There is also Fetlife, which debuted in 2008 and which has been called the “kinky Facebook.” But I think it’s interesting to note that a large group of local gay leathermen use Facebook rather than (or in addition to) a more specialized social-media platform like Fetlife. Even with the limitations imposed by Facebook’s terms of service, Facebook can be made kinky enough to be useful.

In 2005 I described a frequent topic of leather-community conversation: “What’s happening to our community? Why are traditional leather clubs graying, with few younger members in sight? Why is it harder to find contestants for leather contests? Why does it seem as if people don’t go out as often as they used to?” I am happy to report that the situation does not seem as dire in 2014, a time when younger people are actively building “social capital” by using new technologies to perpetuate, evolve and strengthen the leather/BDSM/fetish community. ■

OUR AFFAIRS

BOOKS | BY E.B. BOATNER



Legendary Locals of Pine City

Nathan Johnson
Arcadia Publishing
\$21.99

For a town dating back to only 1881, Pine City has produced a wealth of notable people. Johnson offers stories of connection of local denizens of this interesting and complex locale, just north of the Cities, population 3,127. Legendary GLBT locals include Ashley Ackley, former transgender soldier attempting to reenlist as another gender; Bob Mould, gay musician formerly lead singer of Hüsker Dü; Denise Nelsen, Pine City's first female and lesbian firefighter and a former Ms. Natural Minnesota; Wally Lundin, whose 1996 murder in Minneapolis resulted in the founding of the Center for Homicide Research—the first place in the nation to study gay homicide. Pine City, town that “welcomes everyone,” invites you to connect.



Hibernation: And Other Poems by Bear Bards

Ed. Ron J. Suresha
Bear Bones Books
\$18

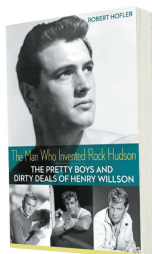
A total of forty bear bards contributed to this collection of more than one hundred predominantly free-verse poems encompassing the myriad aspects of ursine existence. Local writer Raymond Luczak, also a playwright and filmmaker, is the author of some fifteen books, including *How to Kill Poetry*. His poem, “Rapunzel’s Brother” offers a cold shadow of a dream made flesh, while Ron Mohring’s “Beardom” takes a wry look at getting older: “What a relief/to settle into fifty!” Daniel M. Jaffe’s short “Solo Act” is self-explanatory, and Rocco Russo’s “If I had the time” neatly juxtaposes lofty ideals with the inevitable constraints of daily chores and duties. The book offers the joy and sadness, wonder, humor, and grace that permeates all life, even that of bears.



End of the Rainbow: Volume One

Matt Cresswell and Thom Vollans
Lethe Press
\$20

On Canal Street, one finds the End of the Rainbow, where gather the assorted GLBTQ, and paraphernalia thereof sprung from the minds of creators Matt Cresswell and Thom Vollans. This omnibus represents the very first seventy-four issues of this eclectic web comic. The setting: End of the Rainbow, a GLBT bookshop on Canal Street, Manchester, England. This little cosmos is presided over by David, Rainbow’s owner, his partner, Max, a teacher, and populated by a rainbow of ten quirky friends, students, and a miscellany of others, trans, polyamorous, simply amorous, on down to the shop cat, Puffin. The strip, in its second year, will be moving from weekly to twice-weekly, and will continue to feature guest artists and writers. Check it all out on www.endoftherainbowcomic.co.uk



The Man Who Invented Rock Hudson: The Pretty Boys and Dirty Deals of Henry Willson

Robert Hoffler
University of Minnesota Press
\$19.95

Through some 200 interviews, in prose spiced with tinsel-talk and his own eclectic wording (“bubble gum thaumaturgy,” “press funambulism”), Hoffler reconstructs the life of Hollywood agent Henry Willson (1911-1978). Eastern-educated, homosexual, and barely out of his teens when he reached Hollywood, Willson had an unerring eye for star quality in the rough diamonds pouring into town in the 1930s. He developed a stable of males, Rock Hudson, Tab Hunter, Troy Donahue (some women Lana Turner, Natalie Wood), the boys sharing his bed on their way to celluloid immortality. Of Turner he corrected, “I didn’t say she could act. I said she could be a movie star.” A portrait of the times, the difficulties of sexual variance, Willson’s and Hudson’s careers illustrate some very hard truths. ■

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BIGGAYNEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES:

Michael Sam To Become First Openly Gay NFL Player

NBC Bay Area reports that Michael Sam waited and waited as hours passed, rounds came and went, and eventually there were only eight more picks left on the third and final day of the NFL draft. Sam admits that being chosen as the 249th pick overall was frustrating, and while he did not come out and say that his previous announcement of his sexuality had anything to do with his late pick, many have wondered if that might have been the case. Still, Sam's signing to the St. Louis Rams made history, and his overjoyed kiss with his partner made news as well.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM KANSAS:

Fourth Sibling In Phelps-Roper Clan Leaves Westboro Baptist Church

LGBTQNation reports that Zach Phelps-Roper, the 23-year-old grandson of Westboro Baptist Church founder Fred Phelps, has left the church after 20 years of anti-gay preaching and picketing. Phelps-Roper, who had been brought to church pickets and marches since he was a very young child, said that he had recently begun to question the church's teachings after meeting a number of people from the GLBT community. He said that, contrary to what he had been taught about the evil and violence of homosexuals, he has found them to be "among the most loving and supportive people" he has met. Phelps-Roper left the WBC family compound in February, and has had only limited contact with his parents since.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM INDIANA:

Indiana Must Still Recognize One Gay Marriage

The *Fort Wayne News-Sentinel* reports that the state of Indiana must recognize a lesbian couple's out-of-state marriage throughout their legal fight to have one of the women named as a spouse on her terminally ill partner's death certificate. The Indiana attorney general's office said it would appeal the judge's ruling. The lesbian couple said: "We are so relieved. We are so thankful that we can move forward and concentrate on being with each other. Our time together and with our

daughters is the most important thing in the world. I look forward to the day when all couples in Indiana have the freedom to marry."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM NEW YORK:

New York Names Queens Street After Pioneering Gay Rights Family

LGBTQNation reports that a street in the Flushing neighborhood of Queens has been named in honor of he founder of PFLAG and her family. 171st Street, between 33rd and 35th Avenues, has been officially renamed as "Jeanne, Jules, Morty Manford PFLAG Way" out of respect for Jeanne and Jules Manford, who founded PFLAG in support of their gay son Morty. Daniel Dromm, a member of the New York city council, said that the Manfords stood for family values and that he hopes that "this co-naming will not only honor the Manfords, but encourage all New Yorkers to stand up for equality."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM RUSSIA:

Conchita Wurst's Eurovision Victory Sparks Anger In Russia

The *Huffington Post* reports that victory for Austria's bearded transvestite Conchita Wurst at the Eurovision Song Contests prompted an outpouring of anti-gay anger from Russian politicians and stars on Sunday. Opinions ran from calling Wurst's victory "the end of Europe" to likening it to a "mental illness of contemporary society" to saying that the future of Europe was "a bearded girl". One supporter of Wurst was pop star Filipp Kirkorov, who produced Russia's entry in the contest this year. He suggested that her victory should perhaps serve to help Russians reconsider their homophobic views and support of draconian anti-gay laws.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM GREAT BRITAIN:

Step Forward Into Past For British Gay Couples - Coats Of Arms

The *New York Times* reports that first, same-sex couples in Britain won the right to civil partnership, then to full marriage, and now they can have their own coats of arms. The College of Arms, which has guarded noble titles and insignia since the 15th century, recently ruled that

married same-sex couples are now allowed to combine their heraldic symbols as heterosexual couples have done for centuries. While this will only affect about 1 percent of Britons, the gay rights group Stonewall applauded the step, with media manager Richard Lane stating, "Most people would agree that this is a quirky, antiquated tradition, but it's nice that this tradition has now caught up with the reality of modern Britain."

BIGGAYNEWS FROM JAPAN:

Nintendo Says No to Gay Weddings in Upcoming Game

Time Magazine reports that Nintendo delicately rebuffed requests from gay gamers and rights advocates to simulate same-sex weddings in its upcoming release, *Tomodachi Life*, saying that they "never intended to make any form of social commentary." Dozens of countries across the globe now allow gay marriage, but it's still not permitted in some virtual worlds. Nintendo has resisted calls from gay rights advocates to allow avatars in same sex relationships to marry in its new life simulator game. In the new game, an avatar called a "Mii" can go shopping, visit amusement parks, and do just about anything, other than marry another avatar of the same sex.

BIGGAYNEWS FROM CRIMEA:

Russia's 'Gay Propaganda' Law Takes Effect In Crimea

Advocate.com reports that GLBT people in Crimea are now subject to Russia's so-called "gay propaganda" law. Citizens of the peninsula recently voted to become part of Russia, and authorities have canceled an upcoming Pride march, along with announcing plans to create a "morality police", implement censorship of social media, and close down GLBT clubs and organizations. Maxim Kornilov, a 29-year-old gay man, told reporters that "before Russian occupation, it was really complicated to be a gay in Ukraine - that's why I'm still in the closet and feel trapped. Now it's absolutely unbearable." Kornilov plans to flee to Turkey as soon as he can afford to do so. ■

98 Percent

We transgender folk call it “passing”—the ability to easily present in the way that your brain’s been shouting is your “real” gender ever since you can remember.

Some of us—like yours truly—care greatly about whether we pass. For others, passing doesn’t matter. I respect that, too.

For me, designated male at birth and now transitioned to female, the question is whether a stranger would be inclined to guess that I was born with a penis instead of a vagina.

In other words, how well do I “pass?”

I often say that I pass “98 percent.” Thanks to estrogen and the miracles of plastic surgery, I have wonderful feminine bumps and curves. Throw in a nice blonde ponytail and eyes that only a mother could bestow on a daughter, and I’d be willing to challenge any newcomer to figure out my birth anatomy.

That is, until I open my mouth. At that point, perceptions usually change. Puberty and genetics gave me pipes that are unmistakably masculine, even coarse.

Ouch. Double ouch. Oh, how I absolutely detest my voice!

Almost daily, I’m reminded about how I don’t fit in 100 percent. If it isn’t an off glance from the coffee barista as she takes my order, it’s a sudden cold stare by the man responding to my reflexive “thank you” when he’s held open the door.

And don’t even get me started on the reactions in elevators when I absentmindedly comment on Minnesota’s abysmal weather.

Time and again, I so forget that I don’t sound like I look. You’d think that I’d learn by now.

It would be relatively okay except that sometimes, my voice actually puts me at risk. For example, as I bantered with the bartender at my favorite restaurant while waiting for a friend, a man appeared at my side. He said, “You look like a woman and act like a woman, but you sound like a dude. Are you a dude?”

“No,” I answered. “I’m a woman, not a dude. Leave me alone.”

The man persisted. “Are you sure you’re not a dude?”

When annoyance started to give way to fear, I asked the bartender to intervene. He ordered the transgressor to move on. Thankfully, the man complied.

I changed seats from the bar to a table. Afterward, I watched my accoster approach another single woman, leeching, flirting, obnoxious.

While that made me feel a bit better, I was certain he didn’t ask that woman if she was a dude.

More ouch.

I have to deal with various vendors—plumbers, auto care people, a jeweler to fix a broken ring. I worry that my voice will influence how these folks perceive or deal with me. I sometimes wonder if human bias against what’s “different”—the small mindedness that results in judging and exclusion—gets me the short end of things. Throw in that I’m sometimes reluctant to be assertive—what for me used to be a very real male characteristic—and now you have a sense of how I let some things slide.

Don’t make waves, I tell myself.

All of this is far different from how I approached the world as a man. Back in my testosterone days, I pushed people around. I didn’t care what they thought; why should I?

After all, I enjoyed white male privilege and exercised it regularly, sometimes to the detriment of others.

I sure don’t miss being that person. He wasn’t the true me: a caring, compassionate and open soul.

So let’s assume a fairy godmother knocked on my door one day. She’d grant me one wish— anything I could possibly want.

I’ve often wondered: would I wish for a feminine voice?

As it turns out, as much as my voice is a source of personal pain, I would keep it. Crucially, for a daughter—the one who’s had great difficulty with my gender transition—my voice is the only thing she has left from her “old Dad.” I couldn’t possibly take that away and leave her with *nothing*.

What’s more, my voice reminds me of something much needed, something that I didn’t quite understand when I lived as a man: my common humanity.

Everyone has something about themselves that sets them apart from other humans. For some, it’s body weight or height or that bald spot which showed up last year. For others, it’s even more fundamental—it could be skin color or a foreign accent or the emotional scars of growing up in an abusive household.

My voice reminds me that I’m no different than anyone else. The odd looks that I get bind me to other people, many of whom are on the lower rungs of the ladder. I now have a faint sense of what it means to be the only person of color in the room.

For me, who impatiently seeks to make a difference in the world, remembering my commonality with others is incredibly important. *It grounds me.*

Thus I’ll live with the voice.

But what about that fairy godmother wish?

I’m still working on it. ■



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The Practical Heiress

I've always loved the screwball comedies of the 1930s, even though the plot of most of the films is basically the same. They all play out as follows: madcapped heiress charms colorful cast of characters into a crazy scheme. Hilarity ensues.

Ever since I was a girl, I patterned myself after these zany role models. I mastered the madcapped part easily, but aging relatives stubbornly refused to ink me into their wills, so I never achieved heiress status. And you really need that part of the equation to make it work. Because without a well-padded bank account, "madcap" translates as "crazy."

Recently, though, I've come into a bit of an inheritance. As executor of my parents' estate (doesn't "estate" make it seem so grand?!) I learned that they left me enough money to behave in a delightfully erratic fashion for a very short period of time.

"I'm a multi-thousandaire!" I proclaimed to my girlfriend after the reading of the will. "Let's get a butler." I've always wanted a butler. For years I've led a quiet fantasy life accompanied by an imaginary butler, who scolds me sternly, but only because he has my best interests at heart. In my fantasy, my butler serves as my inner Greek chorus, tsking in disapproval at my antics and wisely offering life lessons while he prepares my milk bath.

My girlfriend glanced around our 1,000 square-foot cottage. "Where would we put a butler?"

"We'll get a trundle bed and put it in our bedroom. That way he'll be right there if we need a drink of seltzer in the middle of the night."

"Since when do you drink seltzer?"

"Since now! No more plain water for me! That's for poor people."

She sighed and retired to the bedroom, leaving me on the back porch

to plan my first adventure. "I'll go to Morocco," was my first thought.

But after reflecting a moment, I realized that taking off to an exotic locale is more suited for a young heiresses with little life-experience. It's not really for a middle-aged woman with suburban sensibilities and a 9 p.m. bedtime. Yes, I long to be a madcap! But it needs to be in a locale with decent plumbing and a low crime rate. "Maybe a weekend at a nice bed-and-breakfast in Duluth," I reasoned.

Next, I cast about on the Internet for foolish ways to spend my fortune. I found all kinds of great ideas. I could give it to that Nigerian prince who keeps sending me emails. However, just as I was about to divert a chunk of my inheritance to a ranch for orphaned sloths, my inner butler (who, at the moment, sounded suspiciously like my father) suggested it might be wiser to bank the funds in my retirement account. "There will be plenty of time to be madcap when you're 65," he noted sagely.

After following the imaginary butler's advice, I realized that I hadn't even put aside enough money to buy a seltzer, let alone waste foolishly on a new madcapped lifestyle. The entire inheritance was now sensibly stored in a tax-deferred account. Just the phrase "tax-deferred" put me in a funk. All these years I thought the only thing keeping me from being truly madcap was money. Now I realized that my real inheritance from my parents is my damned work ethic, deeply ingrained pragmatism, and an inability to be frivolous.

But I slowly perked up when I remembered my second favorite movie genre: film noir. Now that I'm an heiress, surely someone is plotting to kill me! I glanced darkly at the bedroom, where my girlfriend lay waiting for me in a black negligee. Had I already told her that she is my beneficiary? ■

TROLÍN, UN DIABLITO ROSA

POR RODRO



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Salut, je suis un personnage de bandes dessinées... Avez-vous quelque chose pour moi?



Do you know good jokes, can you step on a banana peel and trip?
Racontes-tu de bonne blagues, sais-tu glisser sur une peau de banane et tomber?



Can you get away from an explosion? Enough!
Sais-tu t'extirper d'une explosion? Ça suffit!



I better try politics... For that, you don't need to know anything.
Je devrais tenter ma chance en politique... ce poste ne requiert aucune compétence.

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I pucker my lips into a duck face. My face looks better like this. My cheekbones are more prominent this way.

I'm in front of my bathroom mirror, shirtless and doused with hairspray. My hair is slicked back in a not-slicked-back way. It's supposed to be a pompadour, but "pompadour" sounds like I know what I'm doing. I don't.

My laptop patronizes me from my nightstand with the *My Best Friend's Wedding* soundtrack: *"Just wishin' and hopin' and thinkin' and prayin', plannin' and dreamin' / His kiss is the start that won't get you into his heart..."*

I'm 27 but act like a teenage boy. I spend too much time in front of the mirror, double- and triple-checking my hair, combing it back and to the side again and again, looking at it from every angle, all to impress a guy on a date.

When I deem my hair acceptable, I spend another ten minutes on it. And *then* it's okay. Maybe.

I'll probably tweak it more later.

I spray on some cologne—YSL, three squirts—and flex in the mirror. I spent an inordinate amount of time at the gym today and my "muscles" are swollen. I'd like them to stay like this. I want my date to see me this way, before the swelling goes down and I'm small again. Should I take a picture and send it to him? I could take one right here in the bathroom and naughtily caption it with, "Can't wait to see you!" And then I can follow up with: "Also, marry me. Marry me while my muscles are swollen and my hair is fixed. No, really. Marry me. I need a man dammit!"

I walk out of my bathroom and into my bedroom. I did a dress rehearsal earlier in the day: ten outfits tested in front of my bedroom mirror, none successful, and now I have clean shirts and pants strewn all over the floor.

The Ronettes start playing from my laptop. "Be My Baby." The song makes me want to live in a gay-friendly version of 1963.

I walk into my closet and kneel down to rummage through clean laundry on the floor. I study every non-wrinkled article of clothing for several seconds, mentally pairing it with other clothes I have, then tossing it on the floor outside my closet. This activity is both consuming and stressful, but exciting nonetheless.

A text message interrupts me.

I walk—no, skip—into my bedroom just as the Ronettes hit the chorus, I snatch my phone off my nightstand and jump onto my bed, mouthing the words to the song, dancing while I open my text messages. The bed is my stage, and there is love on the dance floor. The boy is cute, and I *do* want him to be my baby. I do!

Maybe.

Okay, I met him at a bar and we've spent a grand total of 30 minutes together. But still. "Almost there!" reads the text.

Pause.

What?

Wait. *Almost there?* No. No. No. I'm nowhere close to being ready.

The Ronettes stop playing (how long was I looking at clothes?) and my excitement turns into stress.

I drop my phone onto my bed, run to my closet, and start filing through shirts on hangers. How far away is "almost there?" I mean, I don't know him. I don't know his idea of "almost there." "Almost there" could mean that he's five minutes away or ten or maybe he's just around the corner or maybe fifteen or...

My phone starts ringing. I poke my head out of the closet and look at my phone on my comforter. His name is on the screen.

Seriously?

I hurry to my bed. "Can't Take My Eyes Off of You" starts playing from my computer. Loudly.

I unlock my phone while fumbling for the volume controls on my laptop. I stomp my toe on one of the legs of my bed.

"Hi. Hello? Hi," I say, hopping on one foot, phone in the crook of my neck, reaching for my computer.

"Justin?" he says just as Frankie Valli blares the line, *"You're just too good to be true."* My date's going to think I'm psycho.

I mute the music and fall back onto my bed, pressing my stumped toe between my thumb and index finger. I squint my eyes to gut out the pain. Shit like this always happens to me. Do I live in a fucking romantic comedy?

"Hi, yes. Hi. I'm here," I stutter. I'm so awkward.

"You sound like you're out of breath. You okay? I'm pulling up now."

Pulling up now? RIGHT NOW?!

My heart's racing. I'm out of breath. I'm sweating. My hair is messed up. I have nothing to wear. My meticulously made bed is now a mess. There's a wet towel on my bathroom floor, hairspray and toothpaste on my bathroom sink, and clean clothes all over my bedroom. I also randomly realize that my kitchen sink is full of dirty dishes.

"Great! Just buzz my number at the door and come on in," I say happily, totally nonchalant.

"Awesome. See ya soon, sexy!" he says and hangs up.

I drop my phone on my chest, let go of my toe, look up at my ceiling, and pucker my lips into a duck face. ■

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